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[54] LEAD PENETRATING CLAMPING SYSTEM

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[73] Assignee: **Micron Technology, Inc., Boise, Id.**

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[51] Int. Cl.⁶ **H01L 21/60; B23K 37/04**

[52] U.S. Cl. **228/180.5; 228/212; 228/44.7; 228/49.5**

[58] Field of Search **228/4.5, 180.5, 228/1.1, 110.1, 212, 44.7, 49.5; 219/56.22, 56.21; 156/73.2**

[56] References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

3,685,137	8/1972	Gardiner	228/110.1
4,434,347	2/1984	Kurtz et al.	228/180.5
4,467,138	8/1984	Brorein	174/115
4,527,730	7/1985	Shirai et al.	228/180.5
4,821,945	4/1989	Chase et al.	228/4.5
5,035,034	7/1991	Cotney	228/44.7
5,307,978	5/1994	Ricketson et al.	228/49.1
5,322,207	6/1994	Fogal et al.	228/180.5

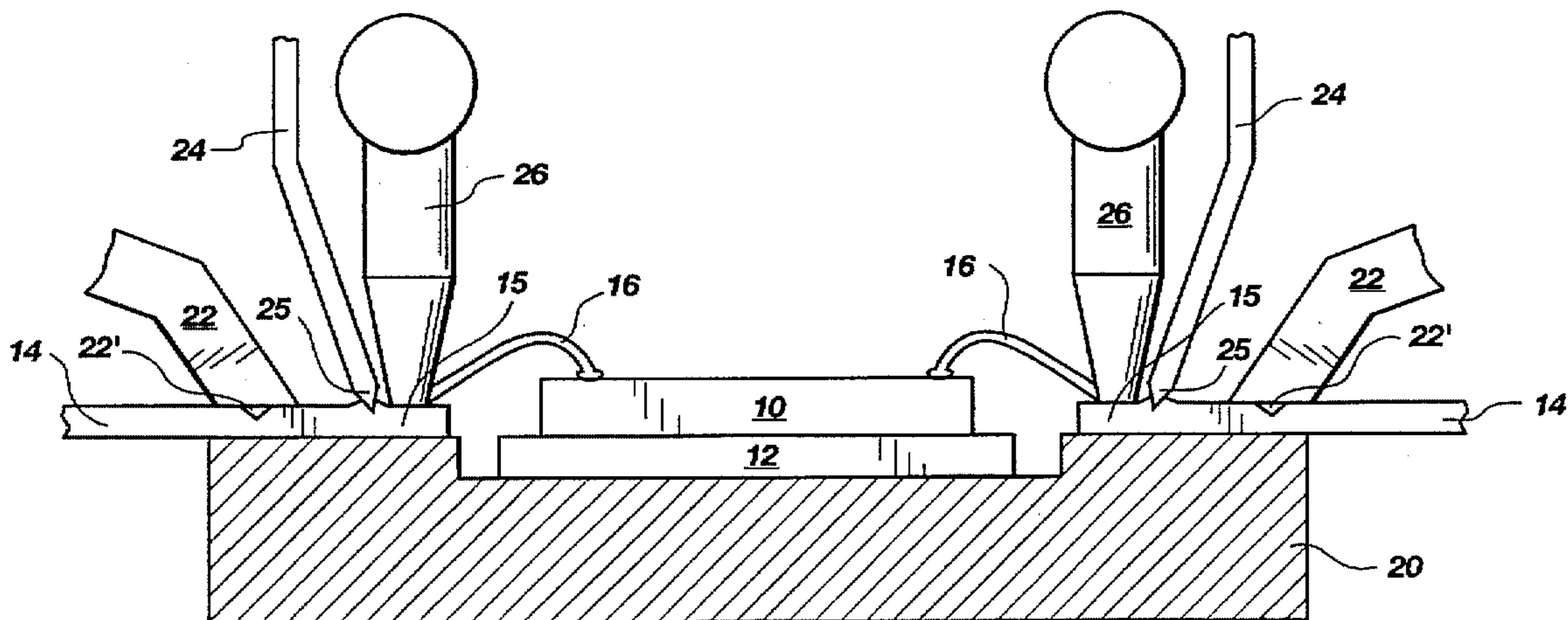
5,425,491	6/1995	Tanaka et al.	228/44.7
5,465,899	11/1995	Quick et al.	228/49.5

Primary Examiner—Samuel M. Heinrich
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Trask, Britt & Rossa

[57] ABSTRACT

An apparatus and method of forming improved wire bonds between the contact pads on semiconductor devices and individual lead frame fingers of a lead frame. The apparatus and method includes the use of a penetrating individual independent lead finger clamp during the wire bonding process to provide increased stability of the individual lead finger for improved bonding by the clamp penetrating a portion of the lead finger being bonded. If desired, the apparatus and method also provides for the use of either a penetrating or non-penetrating fixed clamp for the lead fingers during the wire bonding process in addition to the penetrating individual independent lead finger clamp during the wire bonding process to provide increased stability of the individual lead finger for improved bonding. The apparatus and method contemplates the replacement of the penetrating fixed clamp with another, or second, penetrating independent clamp in addition to the first individual independent lead finger clamp during the wire bonding process.

132 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets



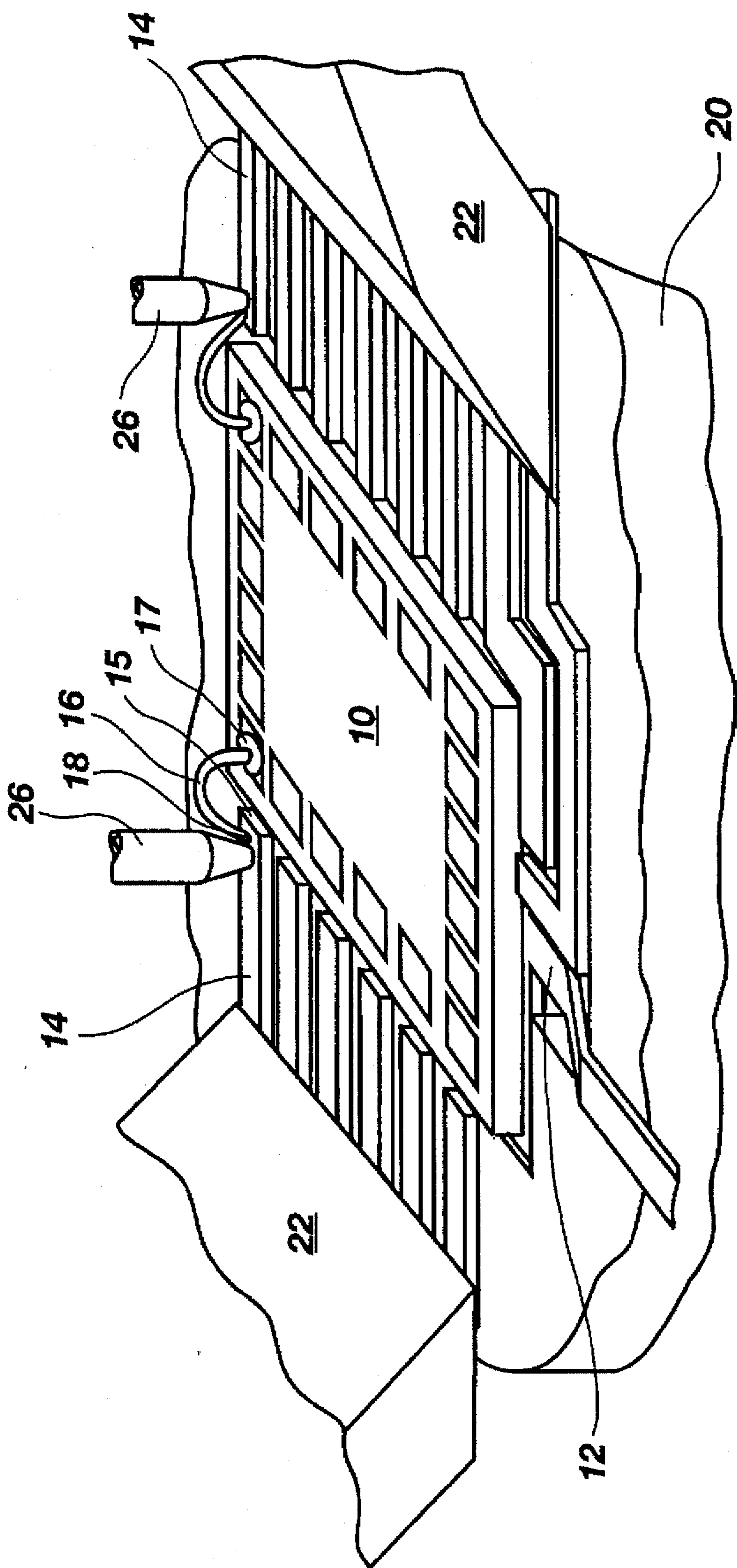


Fig. 1

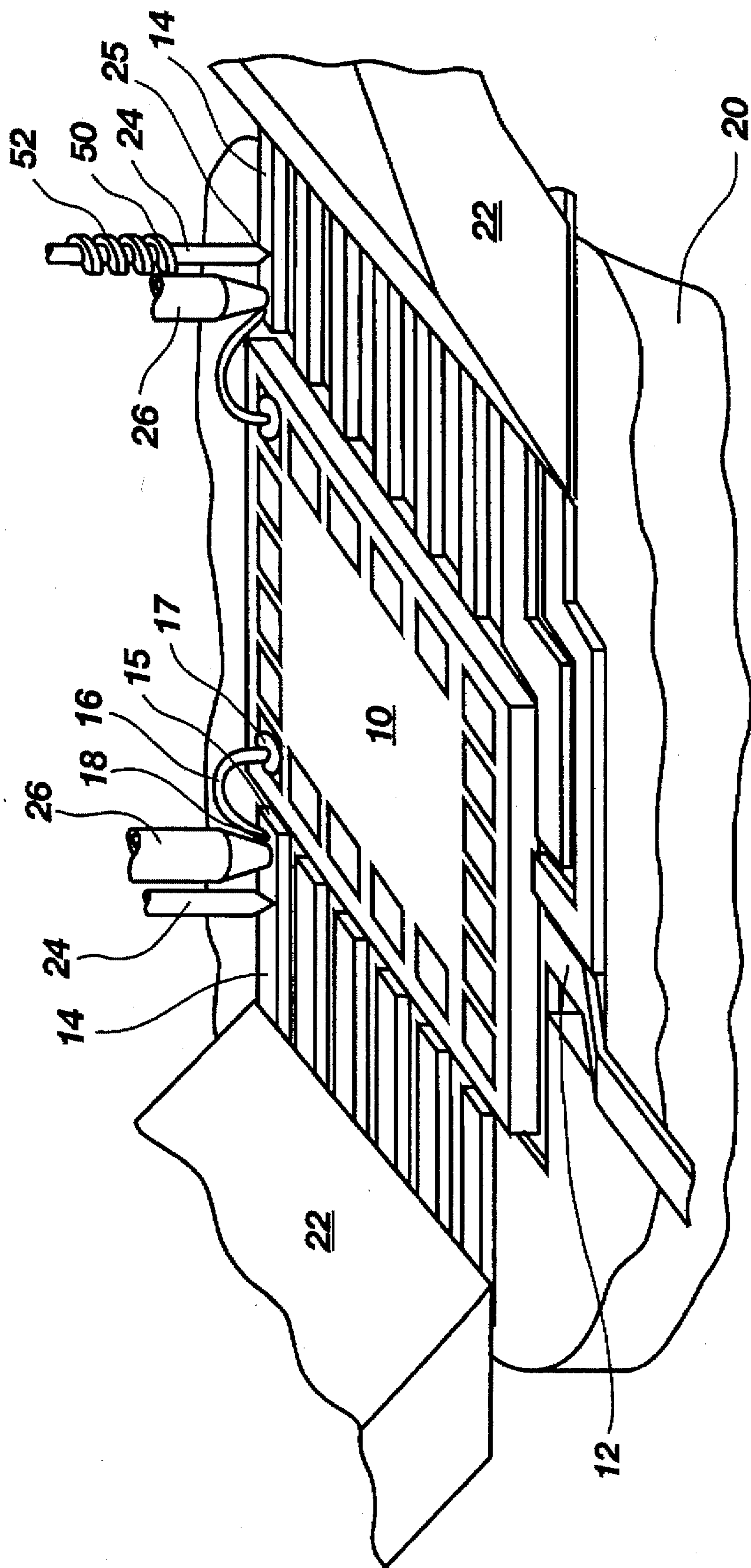


Fig. 1A

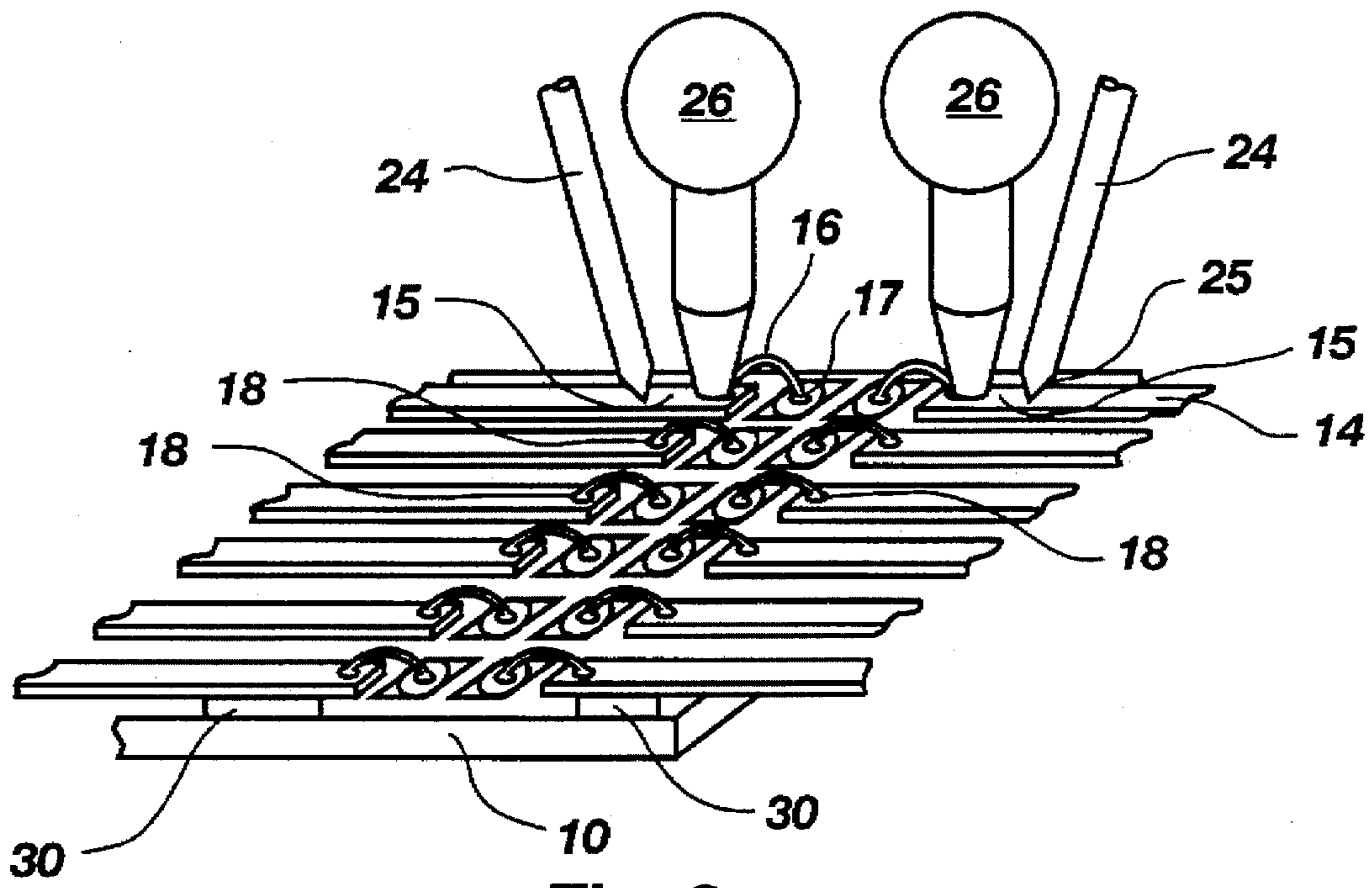


Fig. 2

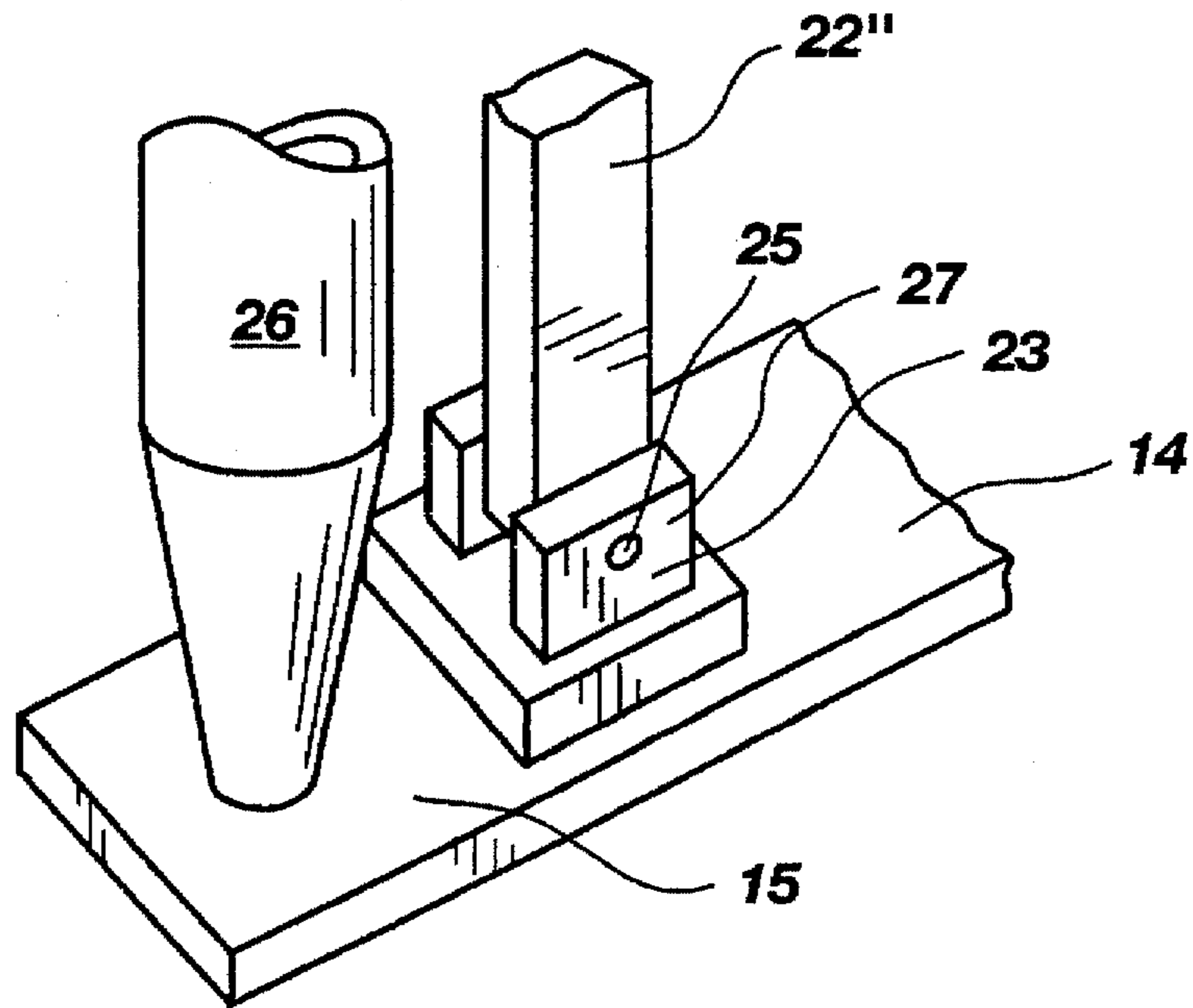


Fig. 4

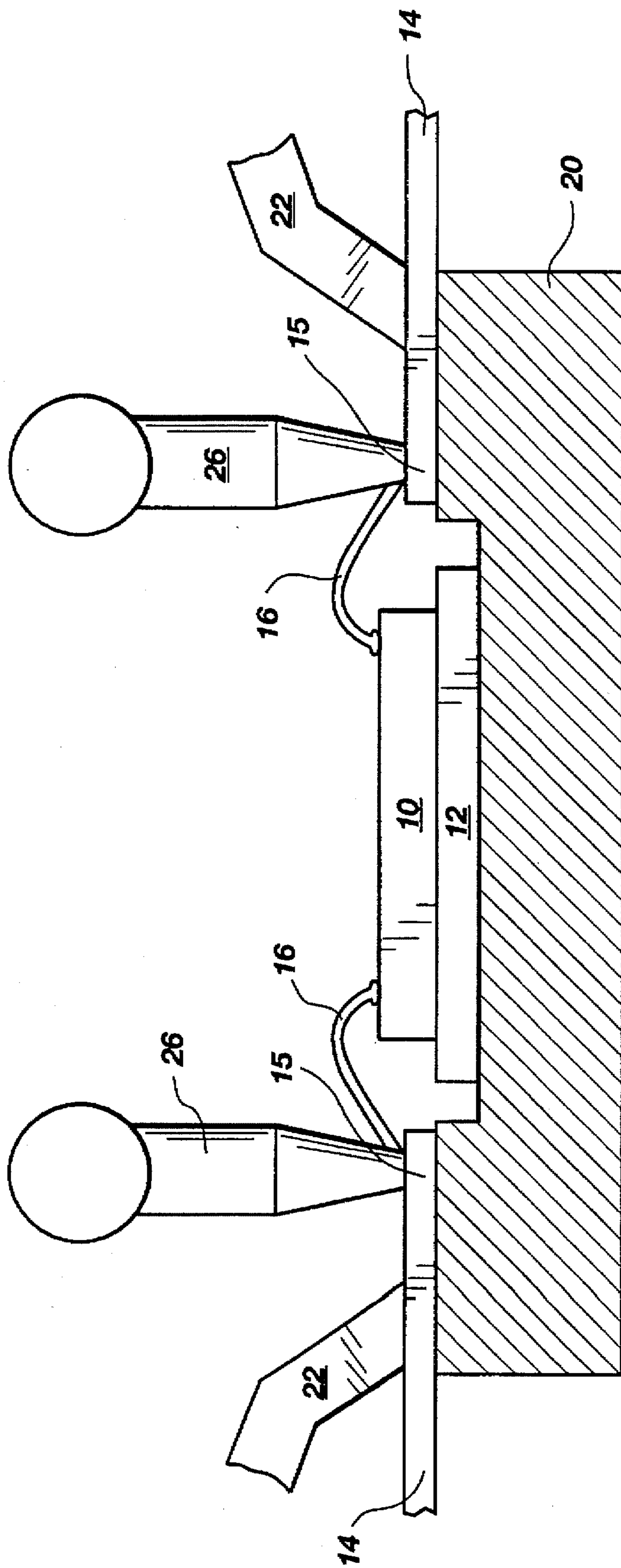


Fig. 3

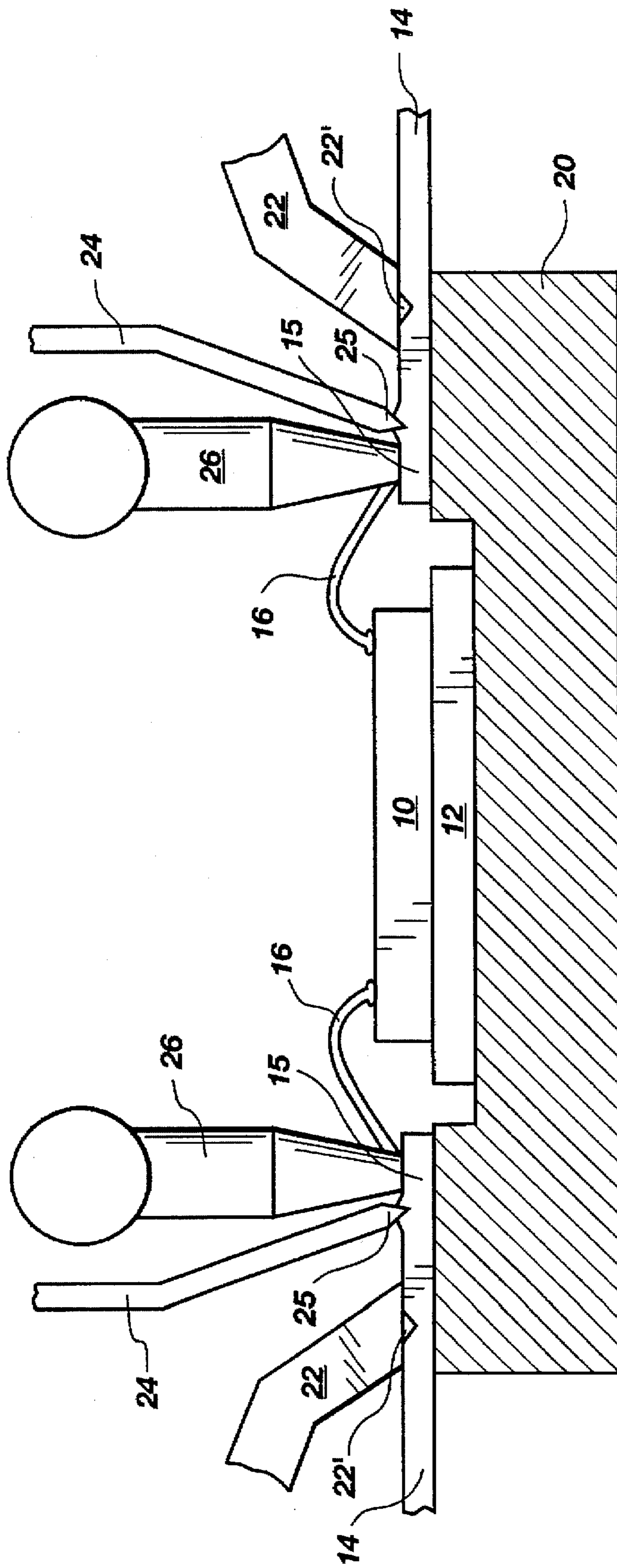


Fig. 3A

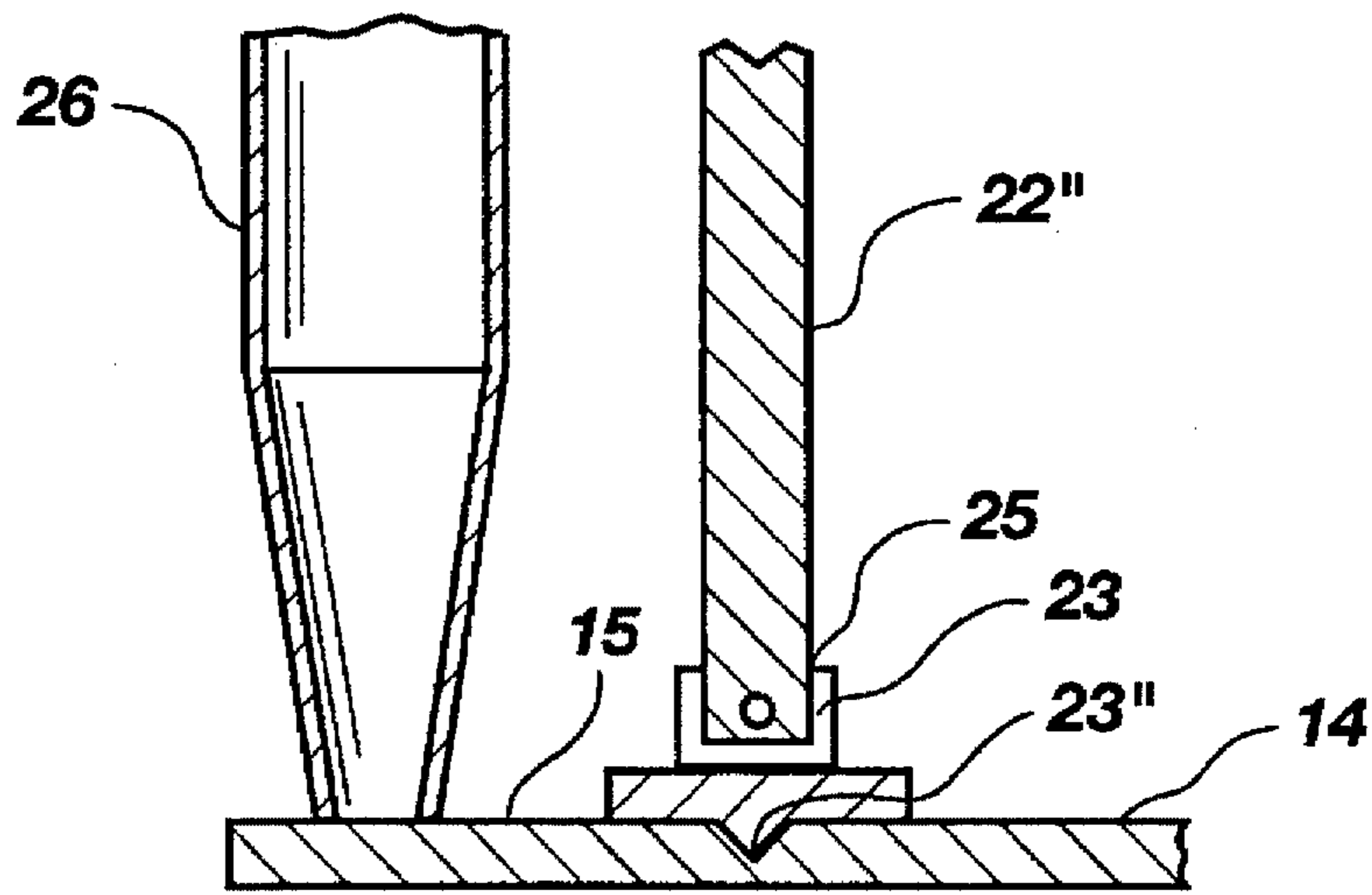


Fig. 4A

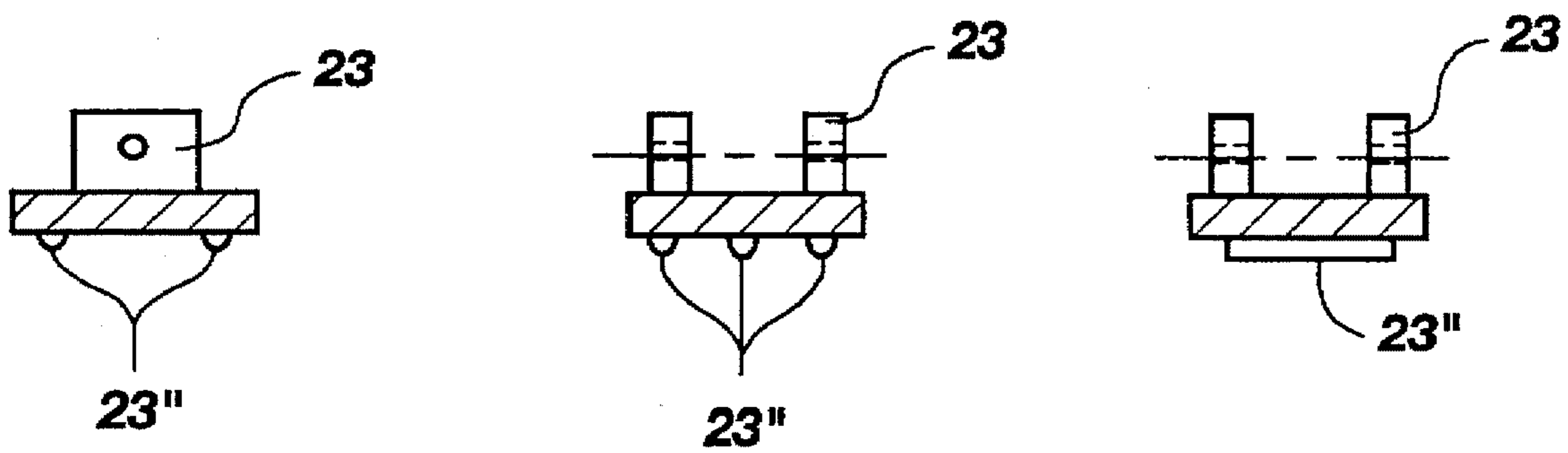


Fig. 4B

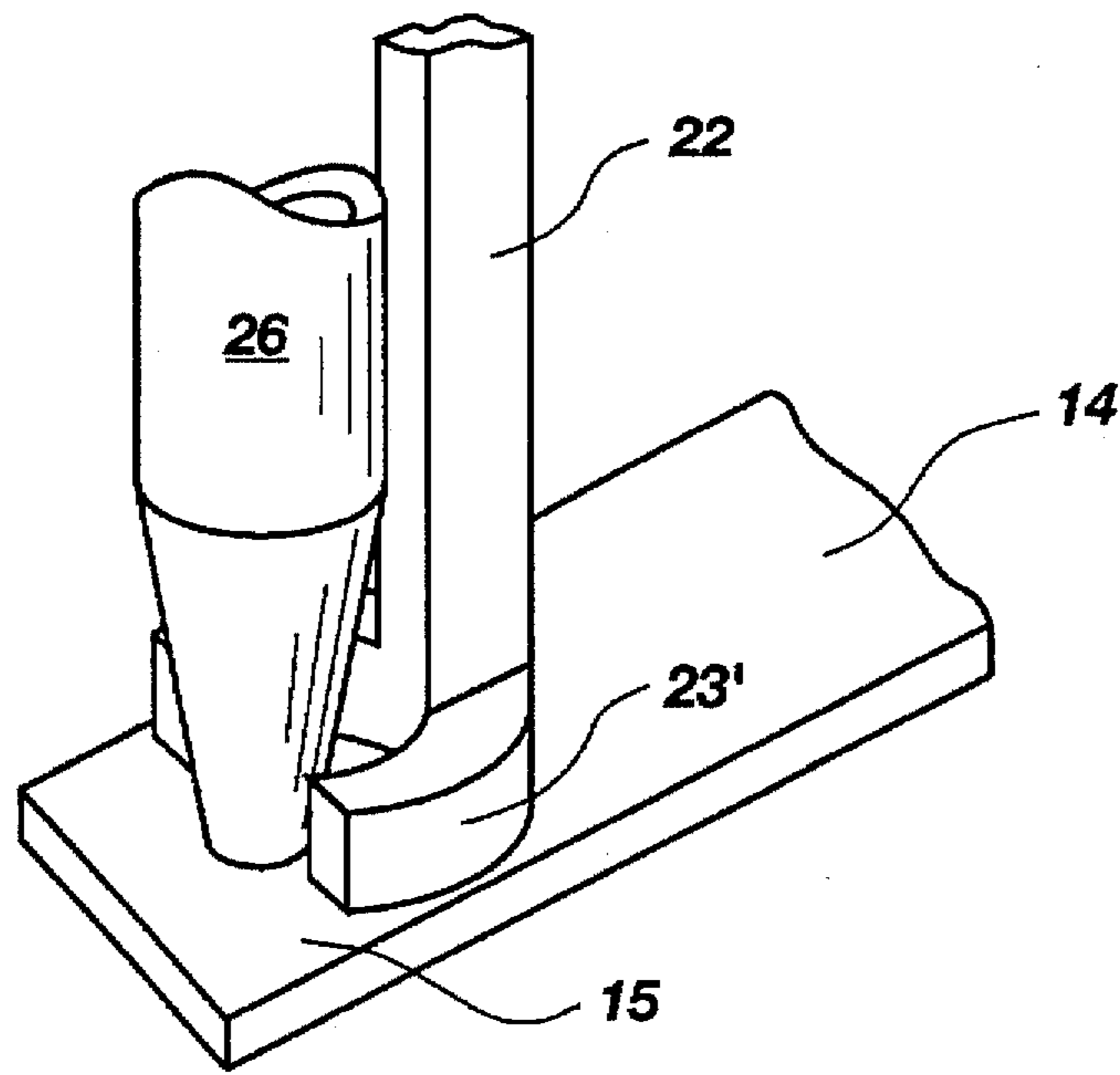


Fig. 5

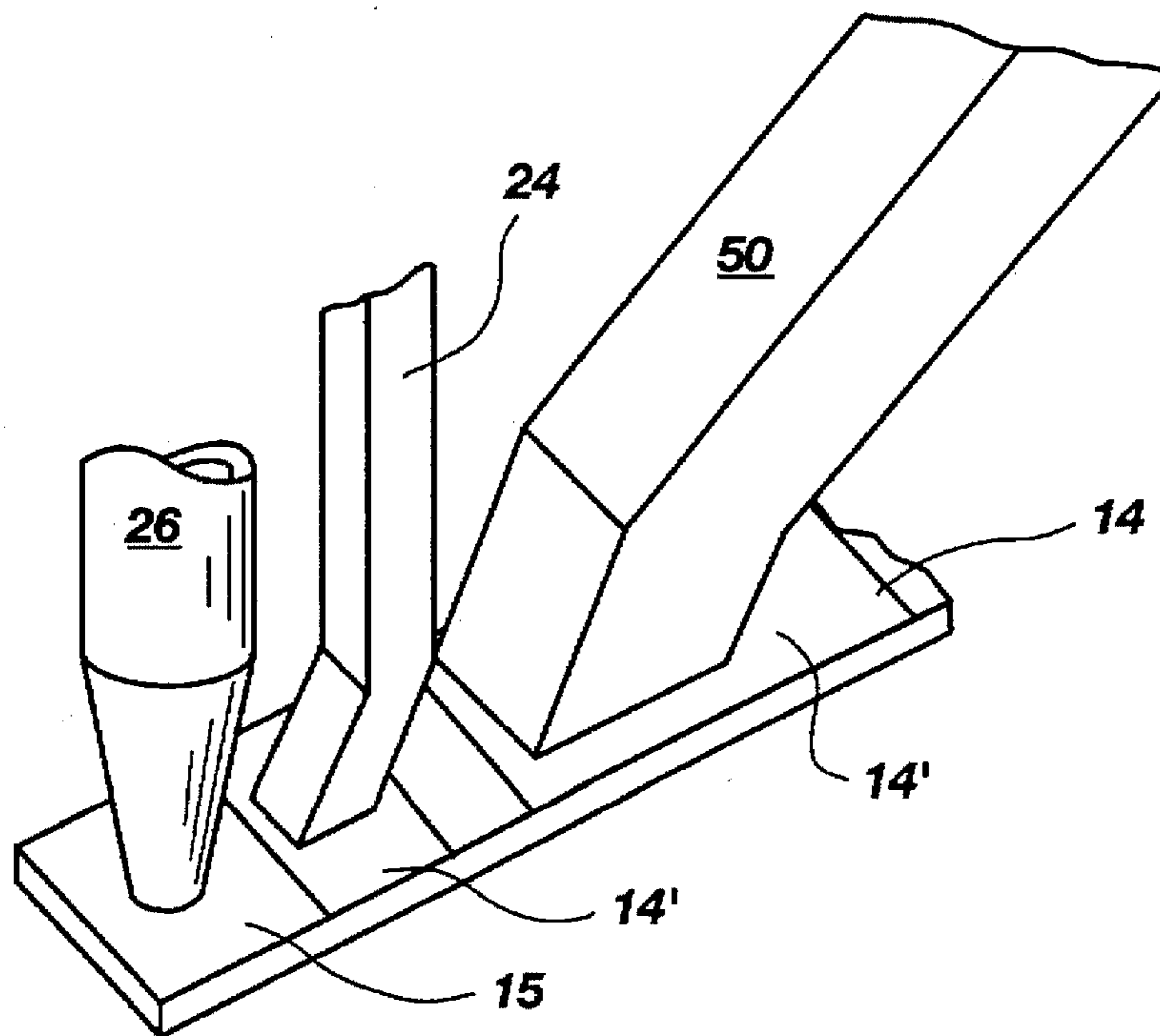


Fig. 6

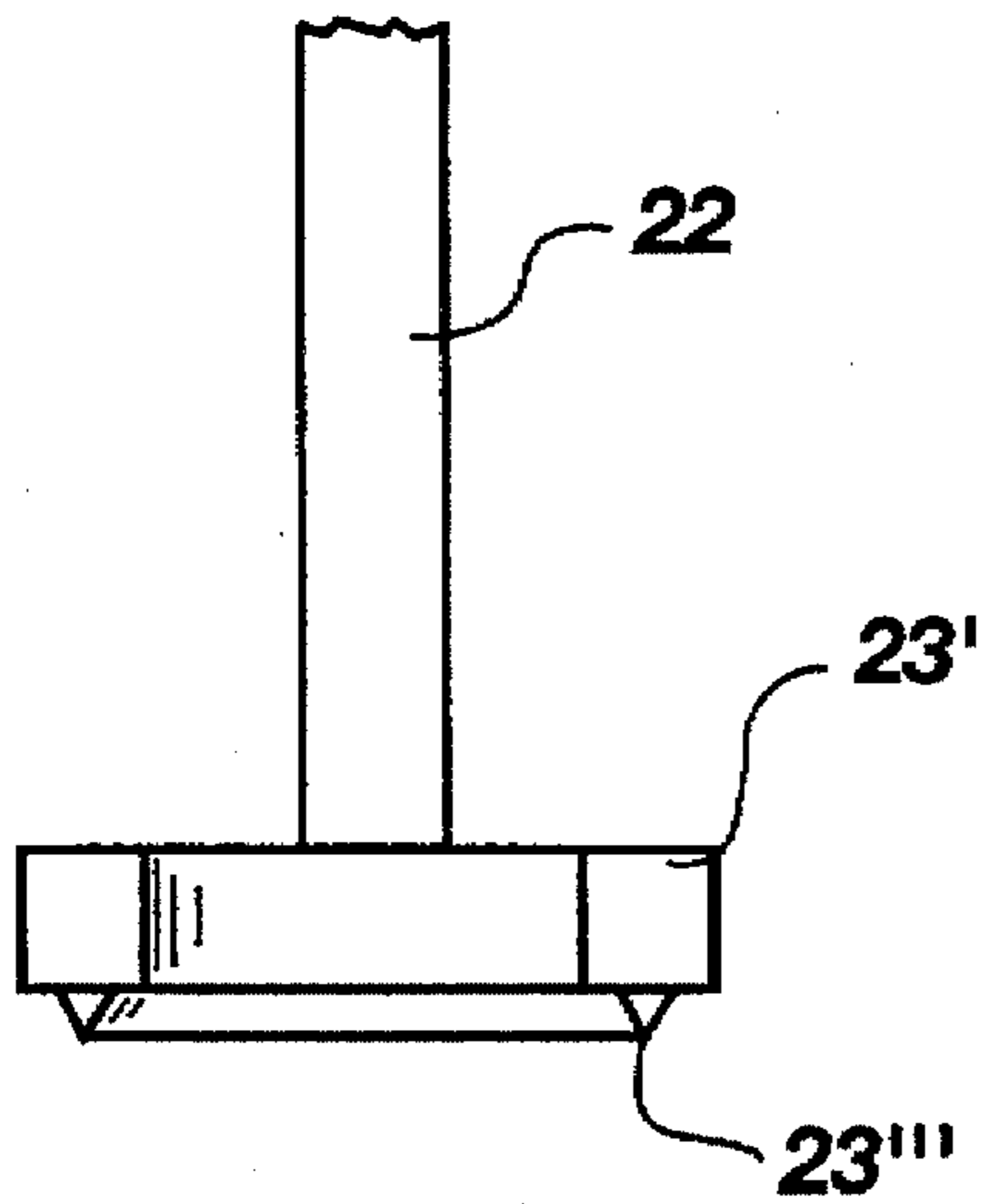


Fig. 5A

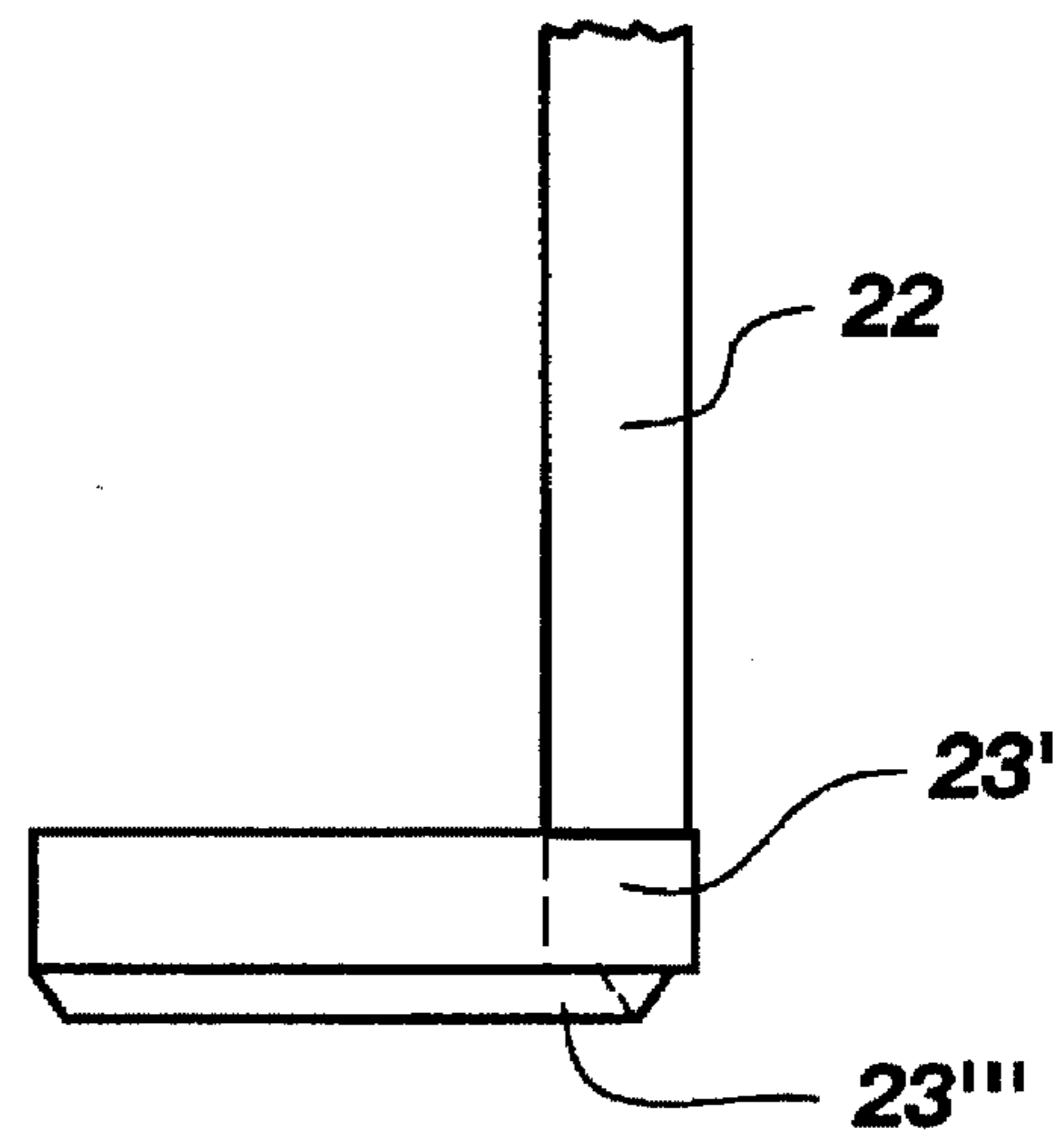


Fig. 5B

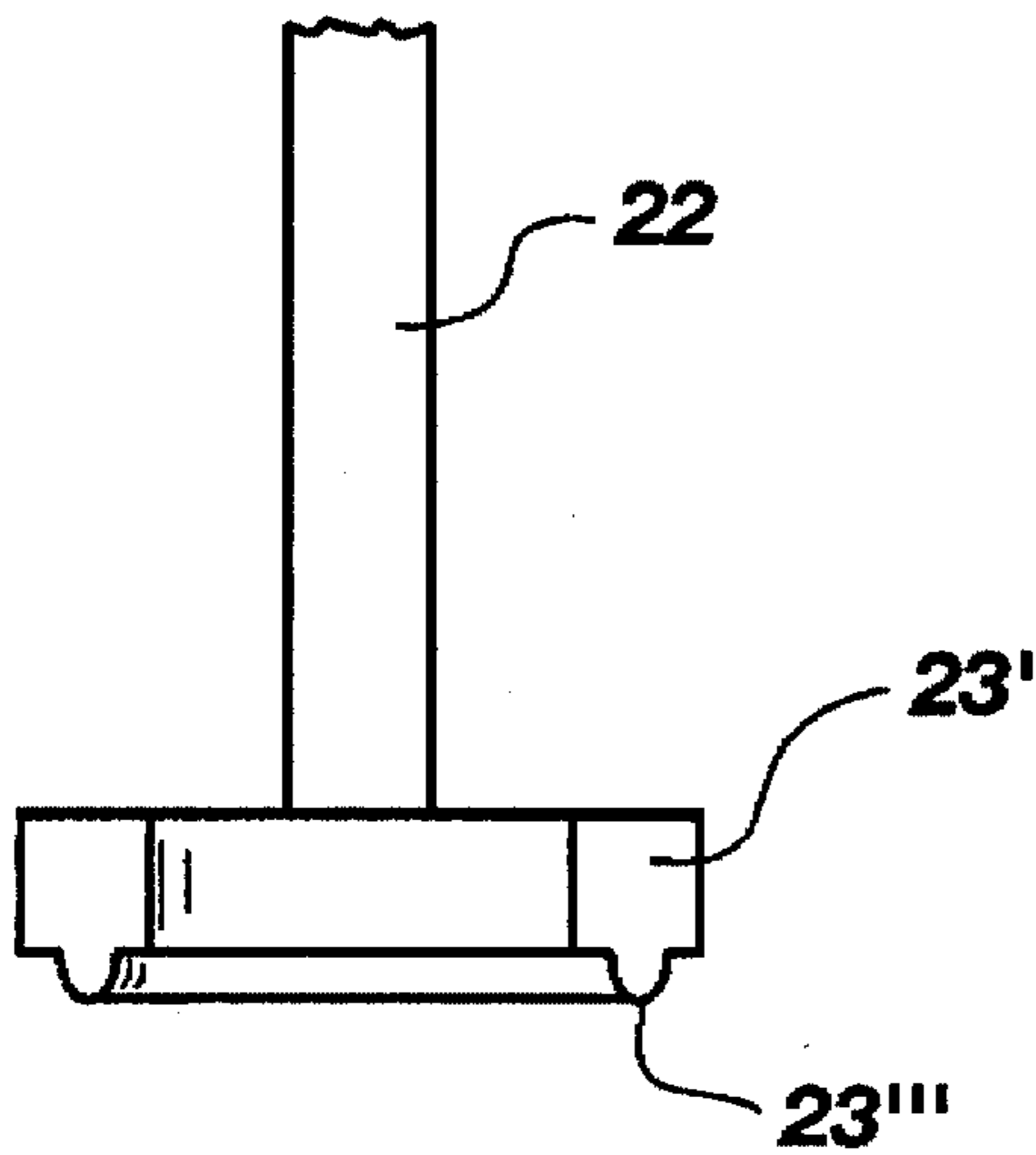


Fig. 5C

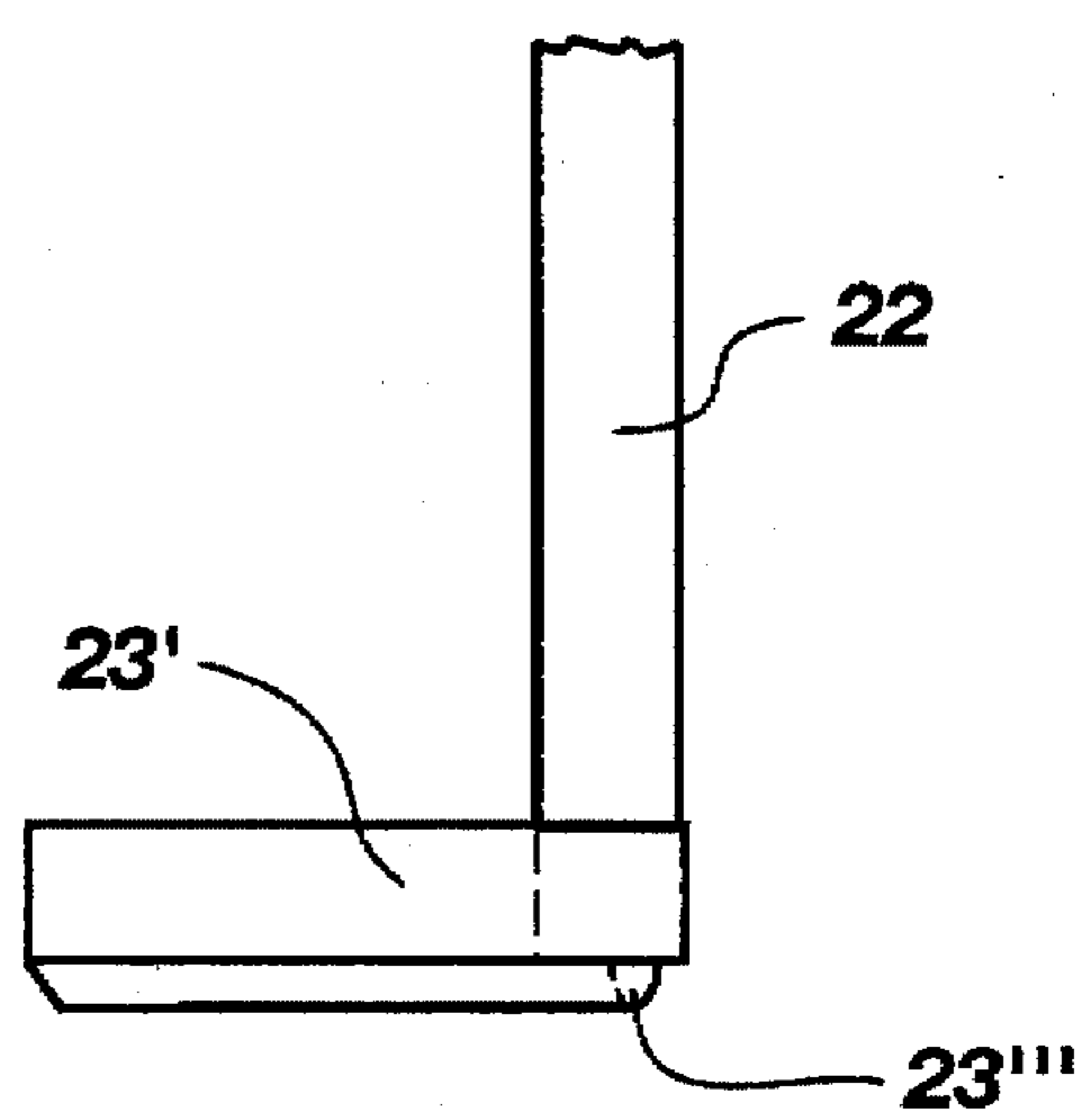


Fig. 5D

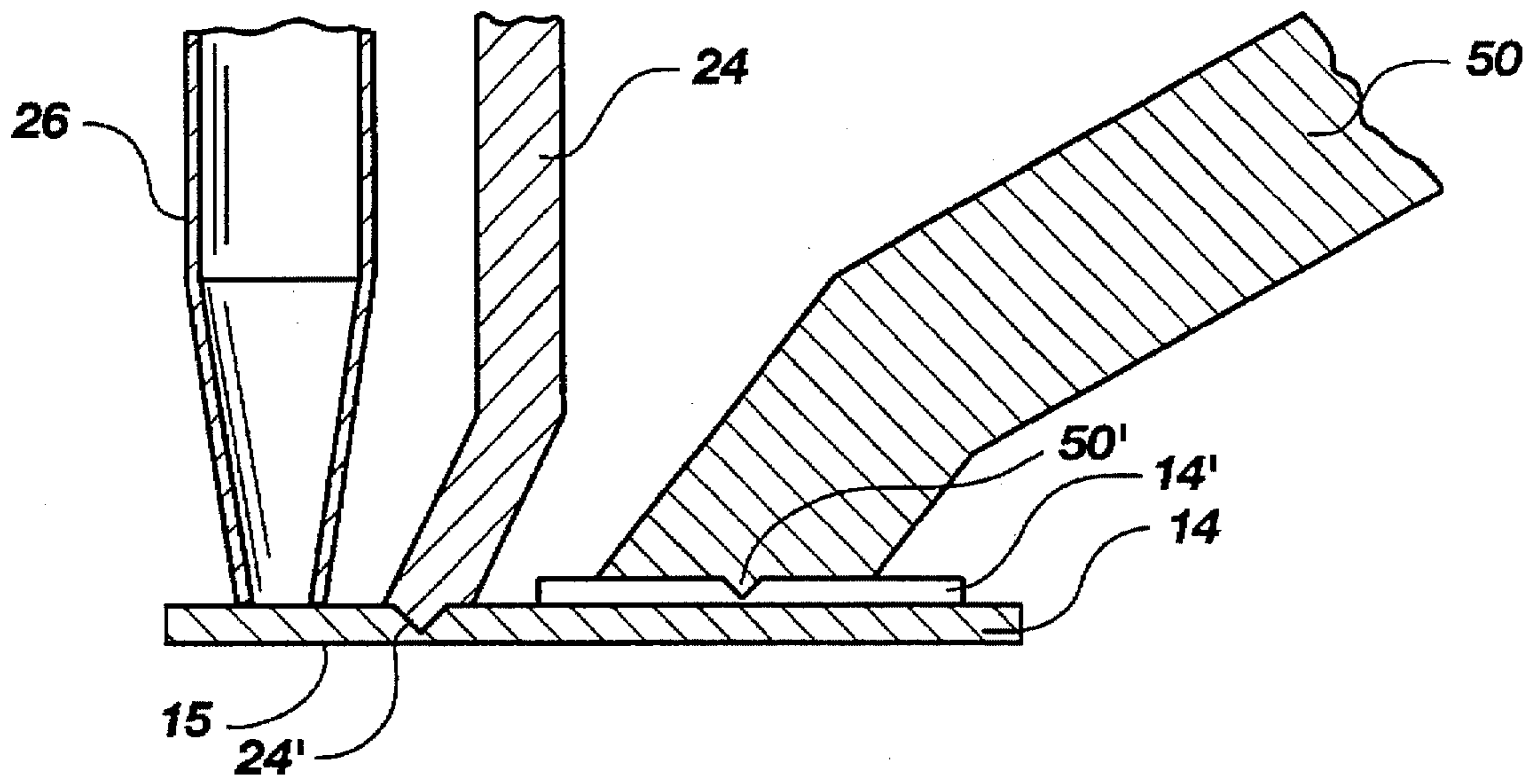


Fig. 6A

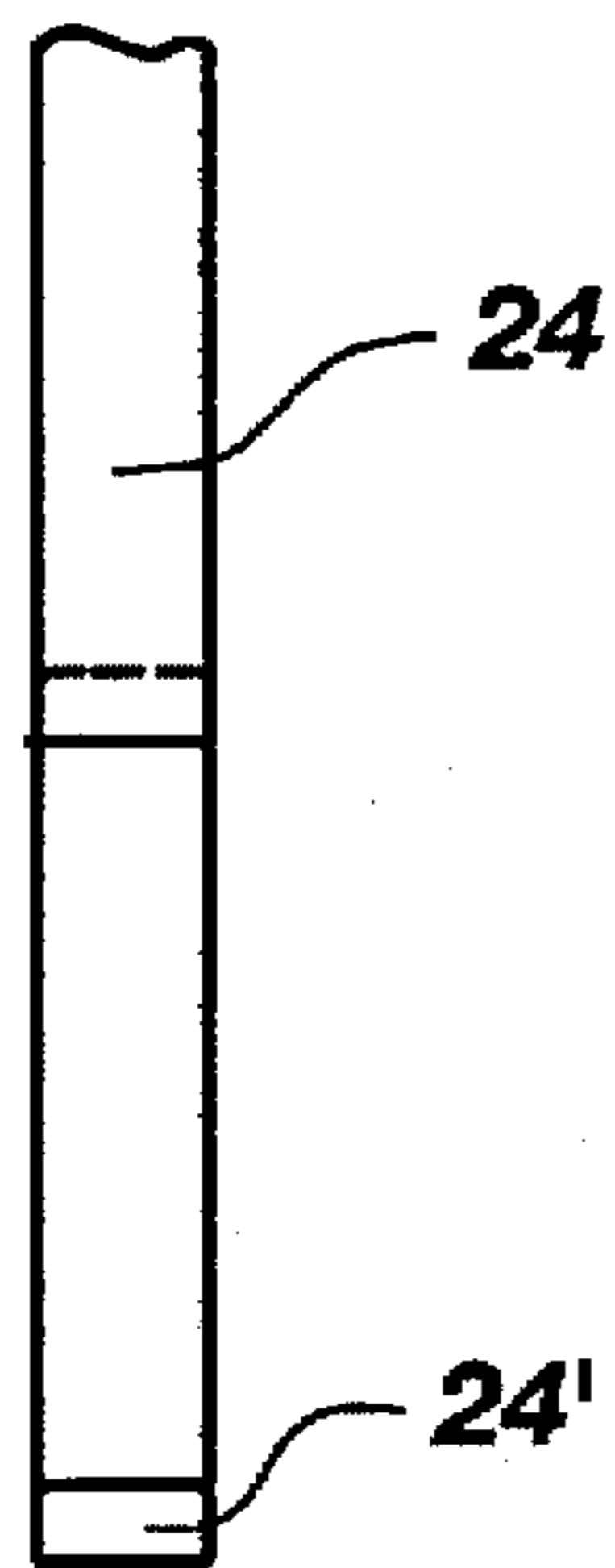


Fig. 6B

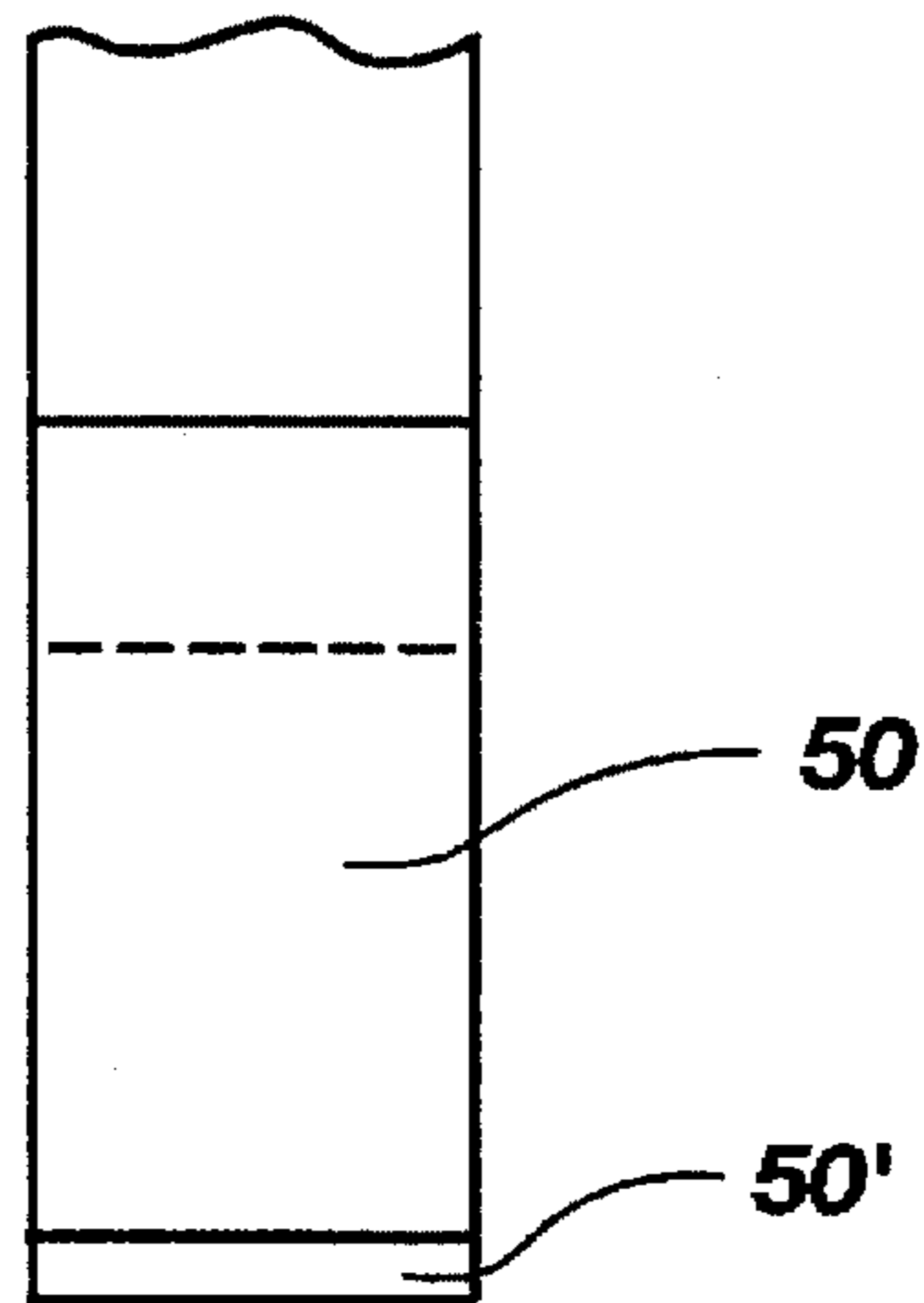


Fig. 6C

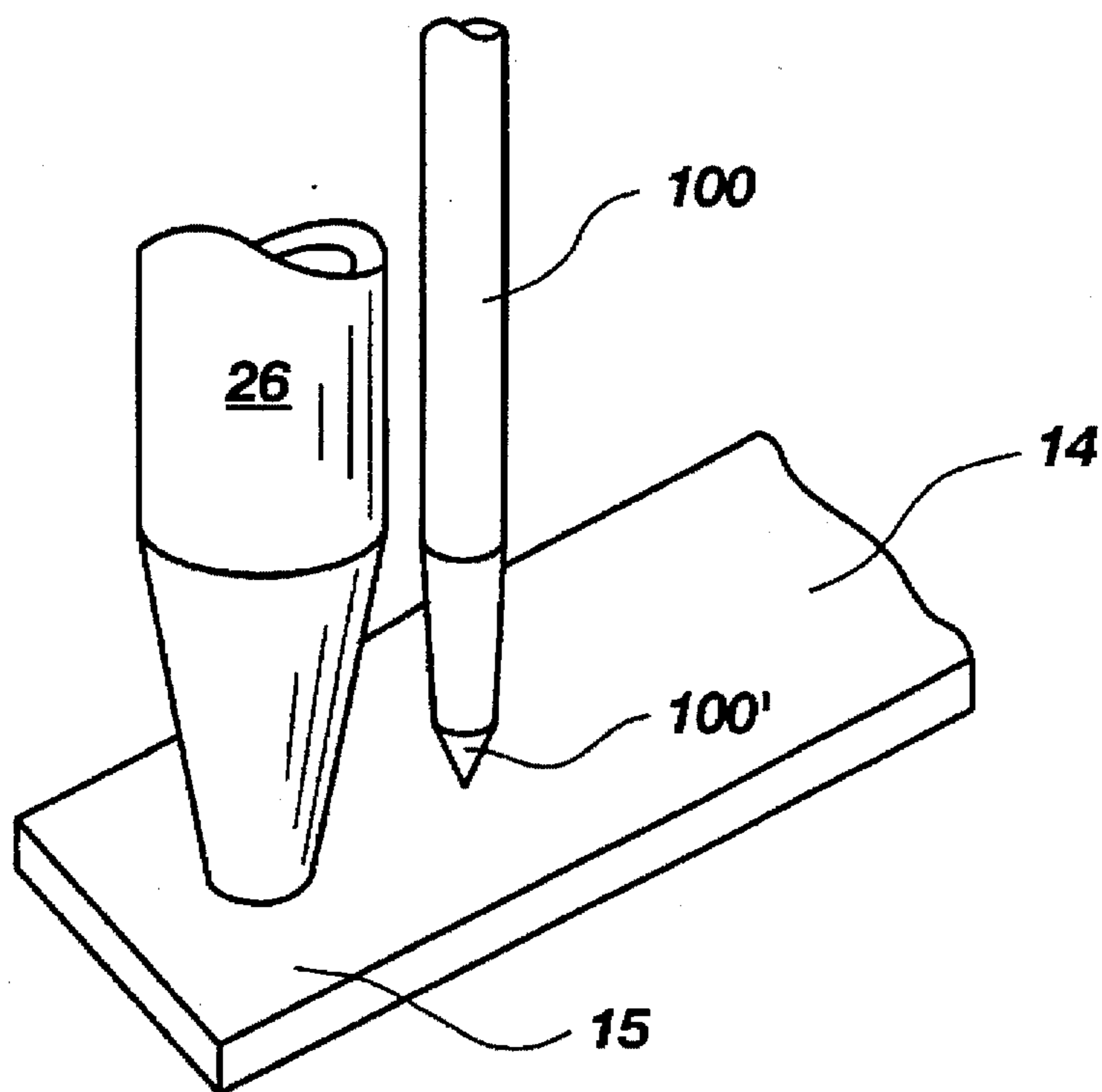


Fig. 7

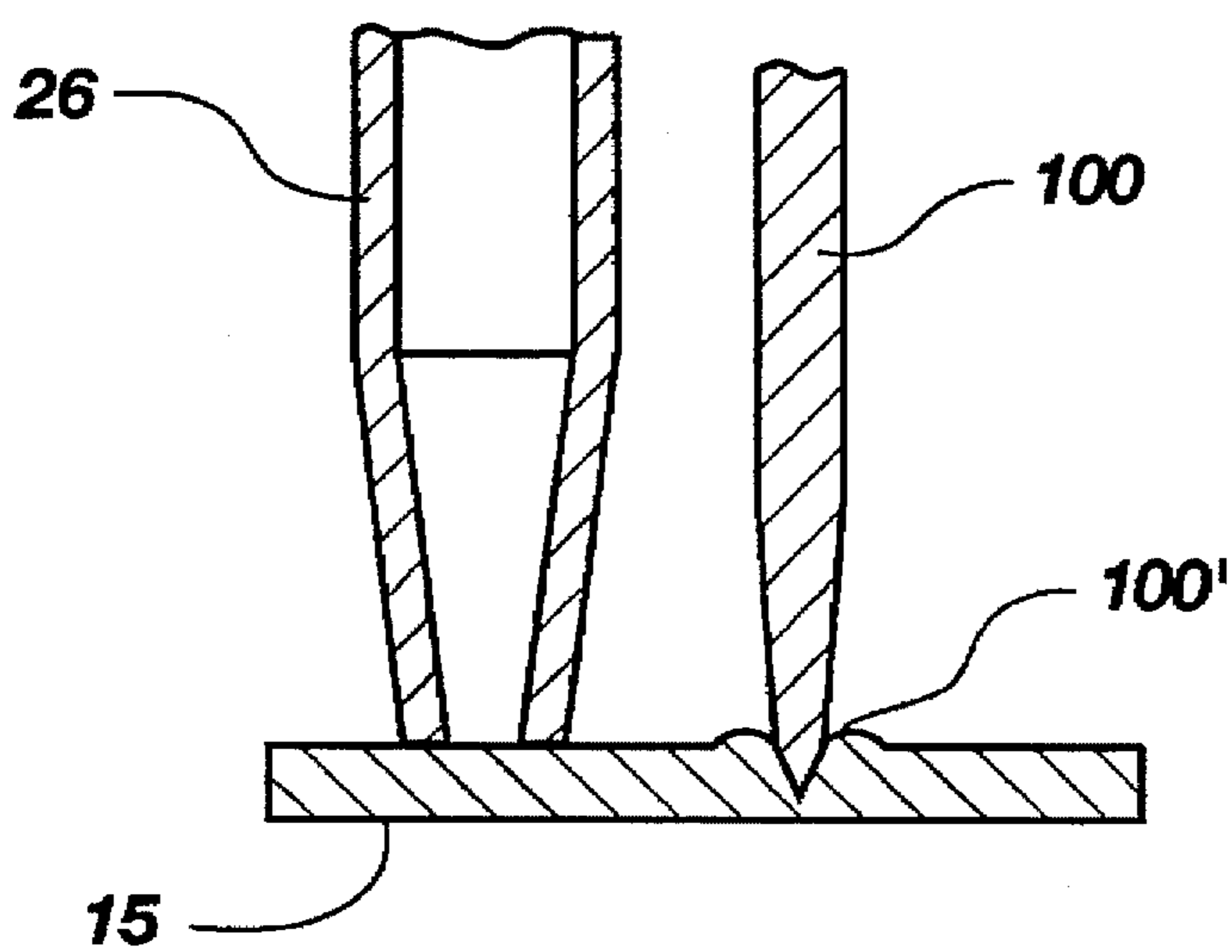


Fig. 7A

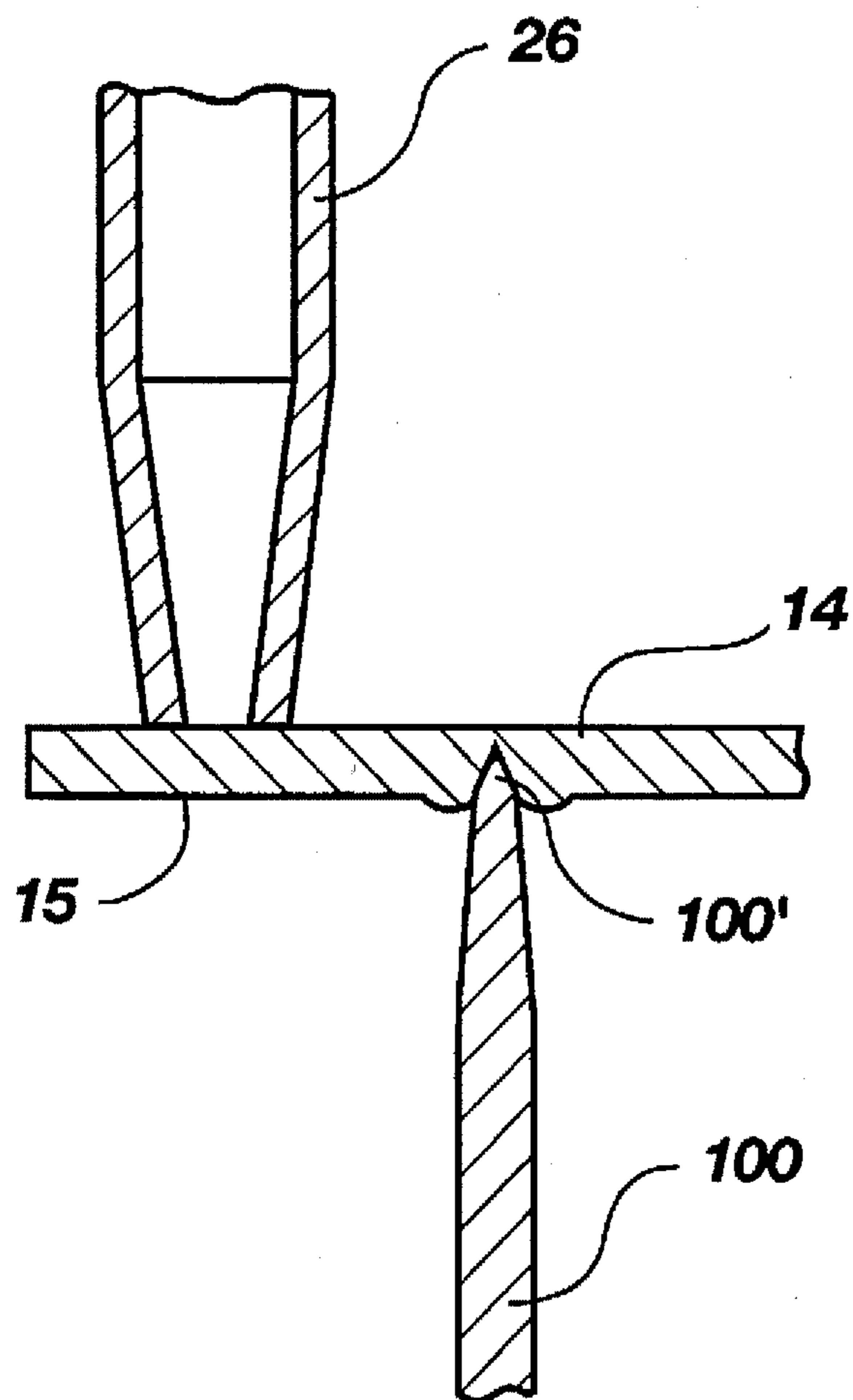


Fig. 8

LEAD PENETRATING CLAMPING SYSTEM

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is related to application Ser. No. 08/598, 616, filed Feb. 6, 1996, entitled "BONDHEAD LEAD CLAMP APPARATUS AND METHOD" and assigned to Micron Technology, Inc., now U.S. Pat. No. 5,633,570, and is also related to application Ser. No. 08/592,058, filed Jan. 26, 1996, entitled "LEADFINGER CLAMP ASSEMBLY AND METHOD OF STABILIZING LEAD FRAME ELEMENTS" and assigned to Micron Technology, Inc.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention is related to forming wire bonds between the contact pads on semiconductor devices and individual lead frame fingers of a lead frame.

More specifically, the present invention is related to the apparatus and method of forming improved wire bonds between the contact pads on semiconductor devices and individual lead fingers of a lead frame using one or more independently actuated lead penetrating bondhead lead clamps or a fixed bond head clamp which may be either penetrating or not during the wire bonding process.

2. State of the Art

Well known types of semiconductor chip devices are connected to a component known as lead frames and subsequently encapsulated in plastic for use in a wide variety of applications. The lead frame is typically formed from a single continuous sheet of metal, typically by metal stamping operations. The lead frame includes an outer supporting frame, may include a central semiconductor chip supporting pad and a plurality of lead fingers, each lead finger having, in turn, a terminal bonding portion near the central chip supporting pad. Ultimately, the outer supporting frame of the lead frame is removed after the wire bonds between the contact pads of the semiconductor chip device and the lead fingers have been made and after the encapsulation of the semiconductor chip and portion of the lead fingers.

Since the lead frames are formed continuously using stamping operations, they are typically continuously rolled on a suitable reel and provided for use. Such reeling operations of the lead frames cause the lead frames to have induced stresses and deformations therein leading to lead frames exhibiting longitudinal curvature and transverse curvature as well as deformation of the individual leads of the lead frame. Such lead frame curvature and any attendant deformation of the leads and lead frame cause problems in the formation of reliable wire bonds with the contact pads of semiconductor devices and the individual lead fingers of the lead frame. Particularly, problems arise when the size of the semiconductor is decreased, the number of contacts pads on the semiconductor device is increased, and the number of lead fingers on the lead frame is increased. In order to form the desired connections between the bond pads of a semiconductor device and a lead frame during the wire bonding process, the lead fingers of the lead frame must be immobilized in a known, predetermined location with respect to the semiconductor device.

Typical apparatus and methods for forming the wire bonds between the contact pads on semiconductor devices and the lead fingers of lead frames are illustrated in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,361,261, 4,527,730, 4,600,138, 4,653,681, 4,765,531, and 5,465,899. However, such apparatus and methods do not address the problem of deformed lead frames and their effect on the wire bonds.

Typically, the deformation of the lead frames and its effect on the quality of wire bonds have been dealt with through the use of clamps on portions of the lead frames during the wire bonding operation. In U.S. Pat. No. 4,434,347 a circular fixed clamp is used to retain the lead fingers of the lead frame during the wire bonding operation. A spring loaded electrode is used to heat the end of the lead finger to help improve bonding of the wire.

In U.S. Pat. No. 5,322,207 a fixed clamp is used to retain the lead frame during the automated wire bonding process for connecting the bond pads of a semiconductor device to lead fingers of a lead frame.

In U.S. Pat. No. 5,307,978 a fixed clamp is illustrated for use in an apparatus and method for orienting bonding sites of a lead frame at a bonding station of an automatic wire bonder.

In U.S. Pat. No. 5,035,034 a hold-down clamp having a multi-fingered interchangeable insert for wire bonding semiconductor lead frames is illustrated. The circular clamp insert **21** includes a plurality of individual fingers **22** used to bias a lead finger of a lead frame in the wire bonding process to provide a better wire bond by attempting to immobilize the lead frame during bonding operations.

In U.S. Pat. No. 3,685,137 jaws **26** and **28** of a lead frame clamp are used to force the lead fingers of a lead frame into a fixed position during the wire bonding process.

In U.S. Pat. No. 4,821,945 a method and apparatus for the single lead automated clamping and bonding of lead fingers of lead frames is illustrated. However, such apparatus and method is used to replace the fixed clamp during such wire bonding. Additionally, the individual clamp is concentrically located with respect to the wire bonding apparatus and must rotate therearound during wire bonding operations.

While such prior art apparatus and methods have been directed in attempting to solve the problems of forming reliable wire bonds between the contact pads of semiconductor devices and lead fingers of lead frames, they have not been as successful because none of the prior art clamps effectively immobilizes a lead finger during wire bonding operations as the clamps merely engage the surface of a lead finger, if properly positioned thereon.

The present invention is directed to an improved wire bonding apparatus and method for forming wire bonds between semiconductor devices and lead frames by immobilizing the lead finger during the wire bonding process.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is related to the apparatus and method of forming improved wire bonds between the contact pads on semiconductor devices and individual lead frame fingers of a lead frame. In one instance, the present invention includes the use of a penetrating individual independent lead finger clamp during the wire bonding process to provide increased stability of the individual lead finger for improved bonding by the clamp penetrating a portion of the lead finger being bonded. In another instance, the present invention also provides for the use of either a penetrating or non-penetrating fixed clamp for the lead fingers during the wire bonding process in addition to the penetrating individual independent lead finger clamp during the wire bonding process to provide increased stability of the individual lead finger for improved bonding. The present invention also contemplates the replacement of the penetrating fixed clamp with another, or second, penetrating independent clamp in addition to the first individual independent lead finger clamp during the wire bonding process. With the

improved clamping of the lead finger by the clamp penetrating a portion of the lead finger the present invention allows improved wire bond impressions and improved bond strength.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will be better understood when the description of the invention is taken in conjunction with the drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an independent individual clamp and a fixed clamp used in a wire bonding process.

FIG. 1A is a perspective view of a penetrating independent individual clamp and a fixed clamp of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a lead-over-chip semiconductor device having the bond pads thereof connected to the lead fingers of a lead frame using penetrating independent individual clamps of the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a side view of the individual independent clamps used in the wire bonding of semiconductor chip arrangement.

FIG. 3A is a side view of penetrating individual independent clamps of the present invention used in the wire bonding of a semiconductor chip arrangement.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a second alternative type of individual independent lead clamp used in the wire bonding of a lead of a lead frame of the present invention.

FIG. 4A is a cross-sectional view of a penetrating individual independent clamp of the type illustrated in drawing FIG. 4 of the present invention.

FIG. 4B are cross-sectional views of penetrating individual independent clamps of the type illustrated in drawing FIG. 4 of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a third alternative type of independent individual lead clamp used in the wire bonding of a lead of a lead frame of the present invention.

FIG. 5A is a front view of the penetrating independent individual lead clamp shown in FIG. 5 of the present invention.

FIG. 5B is a side view of the penetrating independent individual lead clamp shown in FIG. 5 of the present invention.

FIG. 5C is a front view of the another type penetrating independent individual lead clamp shown in FIG. 5 of the present invention.

FIG. 5D is a side view of the penetrating independent individual lead clamp shown in FIG. 5 of the present invention.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the use of two independent individual lead clamps used in the wire bonding of a lead of a lead frame of the present invention.

FIG. 6A is a cross-sectional view of penetrating independent individual lead clamps of the present invention as shown in FIG. 6 of the present invention.

FIG. 6B is a front view of one of the penetrating independent individual lead clamps as shown in FIG. 6A of the present invention.

FIG. 6B is a front view of the other penetrating independent individual lead clamps as shown in FIG. 6A of the present invention.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of another penetrating independent individual lead clamp used in the wire bonding of a lead of a lead frame of the present invention.

FIG. 7A is a side view of the penetrating independent individual lead clamp of FIG. 7 of the present invention.

FIG. 8 is a side view of the penetrating independent individual lead clamp of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to drawing FIG. 1, a semiconductor device (chip or die) 10 is shown being supported by the paddle 12 of a lead frame. A heat block 20 is used to heat the paddle 12, die 10, and lead fingers 14 during the wire bonding process. As shown, a suitable wire 16 has one end thereof 17 bonded to a bond pad of the die 10. The wire 16 may be of any suitable type for connection and bonding purposes, such as gold, gold alloy, aluminum, aluminum alloy, etc. The other end 18 of the wire 16 is shown being bonded to the end 15 of a lead finger 14 of the lead frame by a suitable bonding apparatus 26. The bonding apparatus 26 may be of any suitable type well known in the bonding area, such as a tailless thermosonic or ultrasonic capillary type bonding apparatus which dispenses wire during the bonding process. As previously stated, the lead finger 14 is in contact with the heat block 20 to heat the lead finger 14 to a suitable temperature for the bonding operation to help insure a satisfactory wire bond. If desired, in the wire bonding operation, further shown in contact with lead finger 14 is a portion of a conventional clamp 22 used to clamp portions of the lead frame during such bonding operations. The clamp 22 may be of any well known suitable type, such as those described hereinbefore, and is generic in shape. During the wire bonding process it is desirable for the heat block to be heated to substantially 230 degrees Centigrade. Although the heat block may be any suitable temperature during the bonding operation, the block 20 temperature should not exceed 300 degrees Centigrade to prevent thermal damage to the die 10. It is further preferred that the bond of the end 18 of the wire 16 made to the end 15 of the lead finger 14 be made at a temperature of substantially 190 degrees Centigrade for bonding effectiveness. It is also preferred that the bonding apparatus typically exert a bonding force of substantially 50 to 100 grams when bonding the end 18 of the wire 16 to the end 15 of lead finger 14 for effective bond formation of the wire 16 to lead finger 14.

The independent clamp 24 (FIG. 1A) may be of any suitable shape for use in independently clamping the lead finger 14, in place of the use of conventional fixed clamp 22, such as square, semicircular, rectangular, arcuate, etc. Also, as shown, the independent clamp 24 may be resiliently mounted through the use of a shoulder 50 thereon abutting a spring 52 to control the amount of the force exerted on any lead finger 14 during the wire bonding operation. If desired, the independent clamp 24 may include insulation or cushioning 25 on the end thereof. The independent clamp 24 is actuated independently of bonding apparatus 26 and has the capability of independent movement along the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis with respect to the bonding apparatus 26. The independent clamp 24 is also free to move about the bonding apparatus 26 and the central axis of the die 10 so that any lead finger 14 that is to be connected to a bond pad on the die 10, regardless of location, may be accommodated. The independent clamp 24 does not need to be, and preferably is not, concentrically centered about the bonding apparatus 26 so that it will not interfere with the operation thereof. Any desired number of independent clamps 24 may be used about the bonding apparatus to minimize the amount of movement of the independent clamp 24 between wire bonding operations. The independent clamps 24 may be located in quadrants about the die 10, or in any manner as desired.

Referring to drawing FIG. 1A, a semiconductor device (chip or die) 10 is shown being supported by the paddle 12 of a lead frame in the manner as described in drawing FIG. 1 hereinbefore. Further shown in drawing FIG. 1A is an independently actuated lead clamp of the present invention having a lead finger penetrating portion 25 on the bottom thereof used in place of or in addition to the conventional (fixed) clamp 22 to maintain the lead finger 14 in position during the bonding process. The independent clamp 24 helps insure that the lead finger 14 is in contact with the heat block 20 during the bonding process, immobilizes the lead finger 14 during the wire bonding process, and helps minimize any deflection of the end 15 of the lead finger 14 so that the bonding apparatus 26 accurately, precisely contacts the end 15 to provide the desired wire bond. The action of independent clamp 24, and, if desired the additional use of fixed clamp 22, provides improved clamping and immobilization of a lead finger 14 during the wire bonding process as well as insures that the lead finger 14 is in intimate contact with the heat block 20 for effectiveness.

During the wire bonding process it is desirable for the heat block to be heated as previously described hereinbefore. Similarly, the bonding apparatus should exert substantially the same amount of force as described hereinbefore.

The independent clamp 24 (FIG. 1A) may be of any suitable overall exterior shape for use in independently clamping the lead finger 14, in place of the use of conventional fixed clamp 22, such as square, semicircular, rectangular, arcuate, etc. Also, as shown, the independent clamp 24 may be resiliently mounted through the use of a shoulder 50 thereon abutting a spring 52 to control the amount of the force exerted on any lead finger 14 during the wire bonding operation. The independent clamp 24 is actuated independently of bonding apparatus 26 and has the capability of independent movement along the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis with respect to the bonding apparatus 26. The independent clamp 24 is also free to move about the bonding apparatus 26 and the central axis of the die 10 so that any lead finger 14 that is to be connected to a bond pad on the die 10, regardless of location, may be accommodated. The independent clamp 24 does not need to be, and preferably is not, concentrically centered about the bonding apparatus 26 so that it will not interfere with the operation thereof. Any desired number of independent clamps 24 may be used about the bonding apparatus to minimize the amount of movement of the independent clamp 24 between wire bonding operations. The independent clamps 24 may be located in quadrants about the die 10, or in any manner as desired.

Referring to drawing FIG. 2, a lead-over-chip configuration using the present invention is shown. The lead fingers 14 are located over the chip or die 10 for wire bonding thereto. In such a configuration, the lead fingers 14 are secured to the die 10 by insulating adhesive strips 30. During the bond operation, one or more of the independent clamps 24 having a lead finger penetrating portion 25 located on the end thereof clamps the end 15 of lead finger 14 prior to the bonding of a wire 16 thereto by one or more of the bonding apparatus 26. The independent clamp 24 applies sufficient pressure to the end 15 of the lead finger 14 to compress the insulating adhesive strips 30 to insure a satisfactory bond between the end of any wire 16 and the end 15 of the lead finger 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 3, a chip or die 10 is shown having a plurality of wires 16 bonded thereto. As shown, one or more of the fixed clamps 22 contacts the end 15 of lead finger 14 aft of the area of the bond of the wire end 18 to the lead finger 14. The bonds of the wire end 18 to the end 15

of the lead finger 14 are typically a wedge type wire bond, although a ball bond may be made if desired. As shown, the heat block 20 is in contact with the paddle 12 of the lead frame and the lead fingers 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 3A, a chip or die 10 is shown having a plurality of wires 16 bonded thereto using the present invention. As shown, one or more of the independent clamps 24 having penetrating portions 25 located thereon contacts and penetrates the end 15 of lead finger 14 aft of the area of the bond of the wire end 18 to the lead finger 14. As also shown, the fixed clamps 22 are formed to have penetrating portion 22' thereon which penetrates the end 15 of lead finger 14. In this manner, the end 15 of the lead finger 14 provides improved clamping and immobilization of a lead finger 14 during the wire bonding process as well as insures that the lead finger 14 is in intimate contact with the heat block 20 for effectiveness. The bonds of the wire end 18 to the end 15 of the lead finger 14 are typically a wedge type wire bond, although a ball bond may be made if desired. As shown, the clamps 22 and 24 having lead finger penetrating portions thereon cause the lead finger 14 to engage heat block 20 as well as heat block 20 being in contact with the paddle 12 of the lead frame. However, care should be taken to prevent the lead penetrating portion 25 of the clamp 24 from either damaging the lead finger 14, affecting its electrical characteristics, or severing the lead finger 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 4, a portion of a lead finger 14 is shown in conjunction with a bonding apparatus 26 and modified independent penetrating lead clamp 22". The independent lead clamp 22" is formed having a modified end or foot 23 thereon to provide a larger clamping area of the clamp 22" on the end 15 of the lead finger 14 during bonding operations. The modified end or foot 23 is substantially the same width as the lead finger 14 and may be mounted to have articulated movement about the end of the independent clamp 22", such as using a pin extending through suitable apertures in a pair of ears 27 attached to the foot 23 and the end of the modified independent clamp 22" for illustration purposes. Located on the bottom of the modified end or foot 23 of the clamp 22" are suitable lead finger 14 penetrating members (not shown) which penetrate the lead finger 14 to immobilize it during wire bonding operations as described hereinbefore.

Referring to drawing FIG. 4A, the lead finger penetrating portion 23" of the foot 23 is shown in relation to the bonding apparatus 26 and lead finger 14. The lead penetrating portion 23" partially penetrates the lead finger 14 to immobilize the end 15 thereof during wire bonding operations by the bonding apparatus 26. The lead penetrating portion 23" may penetrate the lead finger 14 to any desired depth depending upon the thickness thereof. However, care should be taken to prevent the lead penetrating portion 23" from either damaging the lead finger 14, affecting its electrical characteristics, or severing the lead finger 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 4B, various embodiments of the lead penetrating portion 23" of foot 23 are shown. As shown the penetrating portion 23" may comprise a plurality of round shaped members located to either extend along the axis of a lead finger 14 or extend transversely thereof or may comprise a knife edge shape extending transversely across the axis of a lead finger 14. The shapes are to be merely illustrative of a variety of shapes for the penetrating portion 23" which may be used.

Referring to drawing FIG. 5, an independent clamp 22 is shown having a modified end or foot 23' located on the end thereof. The end or foot 23' may be integrally attached to the

clamp 22 or may have an articulated mounting arrangement, such as shown in drawing FIG. 4. In this instance, the modified end or foot 23' is generally semicircular, or arcuate, in configuration so as to engage a large portion of the end 15 of the lead finger 14 surrounding the bonding apparatus 26 during the wire bonding operation to hold the end 15 in position.

Referring to drawing FIGS. 5A through 5D, the foot 23' is shown having various lead penetrating portions 23''' thereon. As illustrated, the various lead penetrating portions 23''' include either a knife edge shape, as illustrated in drawing FIGS. 5A and 5B, or a blunted edge (rounded edge) shape, as illustrated in drawing FIGS. 5C and 5D. Such shapes of the penetrating portion 23''' are to be considered merely as illustrations as other shapes for the penetrating portions may be used. As previously described, the lead penetrating portion 23''' may penetrate the lead finger 14 to any desired depth depending upon the thickness thereof. However, care should be taken to prevent the lead penetrating portion 23''' from either damaging the lead finger 14, affecting its electrical characteristics, or severing the lead finger 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 6, the independent clamp 24 is shown in relation to the bonding apparatus 26 on the end 15 of a lead finger 14 as well as further being shown in relation to a second independently actuated clamp 50 located thereon during wire bonding operations, both clamps 24 and 50 have portions on the bottom thereof (not shown) for penetrating the lead finger 14 to immobilize the same during wire bonding operations. The second independently actuated clamp 50 may be of any suitable type and structure such as described and illustrated hereinbefore. The clamp 24 and second clamp 50 may be actuated independently of each other and independently of the bonding apparatus 26 as described and illustrated hereinbefore. Also shown is a soft metal coating 14' located on the lead finger 14 which is penetrated by either the clamp 24 or the second clamp 50. The soft metal coating 14' applied to the lead finger 14 may be of any suitable type, such as gold, silver, aluminum, etc., which will allow for the easy penetration of the coating 14' by a portion of either the clamp 24 or the second clamp 50.

Referring to drawing FIG. 6A, the independent clamp 24 is shown having a lead penetrating portion 24' on the end thereof and clamp 50 is shown having a lead penetrating portion 50' on the end thereof penetrating the soft metal coating 14' on the lead finger 14, both portions 24' and 50' penetrating either the lead finger 14 or the soft metal coating 14' on the lead finger 14 being wire bonded by bonding apparatus 26. As previously described, the lead penetrating portions 24' and 50' may penetrate the lead finger 14 or any soft metal coating thereon to any desired depth depending upon the thickness thereof. However, care should be taken to prevent the lead penetrating portions 24' and 50' from either damaging the lead finger 14, affecting its electrical characteristics, or severing the lead finger 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 6B, the clamp 24 is illustrated having a knife edge type penetrating portion 24' thereon which extends transversely across the axis of a lead finger 14 (not shown). It should be understood that any suitable shape penetrating portion 24' may be used on clamp 24.

Referring to drawing FIG. 6C, the clamp 50 is illustrated having a knife edge type penetrating portion 50' thereon which extends transversely across the axis of a lead finger 14 (not shown). It should be understood that any suitable shape penetrating portion 50' may be used on clamp 50.

Referring to drawing FIG. 7, a portion of a lead finger 14 is illustrated in relation to a bonding apparatus 26 and

independent individual clamp 100 having a penetrating point 100' thereon. The clamp 100 is generally circular in shape having a frusto-conical penetrating point 100' thereon for penetrating a lead finger 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 7A, the clamp 100 having penetrating point 100' thereon and the bonding apparatus 26 are shown in cross-section in relation to the penetrating and clamping of a lead finger 14 during wire bonding thereof. The penetrating point 100' penetrates the lead finger 14 to immobilize the lead finger 14 during the wire bonding operation. As previously stated, care should be taken to prevent the lead penetrating portion 100' from either damaging the lead finger 14, affecting its electrical characteristics, or severing the lead finger 14.

Referring to drawing FIG. 8, a bonding apparatus 26 is illustrated in relation to a lead finger 14 with the penetrating independent individual clamp 100 having a penetrating point 100' thereon. As illustrated, the clamp 100 is acting on the opposite side of the lead finger 14 from the bonding apparatus 26. It should be understood that any of the penetrating clamps hereinbefore described may act on the opposite side of the lead clamp 26 during the wire bonding operations regarding a lead finger 14. It is not necessary that the penetrating clamp be positioned on the same side of the lead finger 14 as the bonding apparatus 26. As stated previously, care should be taken to prevent the lead penetrating portion 100', or the penetrating portion of any penetrating clamp hereinbefore described, from either damaging the lead finger 14, affecting its electrical characteristics, or severing the lead finger 14.

METHOD OF BONDING

Referring to drawing FIGS. 1 through 3, in the method of the present invention, a chip or die 10 is positioned within the bonding area of the bonding apparatus 26. If desired for use in addition to a penetrating individual independent clamp 24, a conventional or penetrating clamp 22 serves to help straighten the lead frame and position the lead fingers 14 during subsequent bonding operations. Next, the chip or die 10 and the lead finger 14 are heated to the desired temperature before bonding operations by the heat block 20. At this time, the penetrating individual independent clamp 24 is engaged, moved to the appropriate lead finger 14 which is to have a wire bonded thereto, and the clamp 24 actuated to clamp and immobilize the end 15 of the lead finger 14 against the heat block 20 or the adhesive strip 30. The wire bonding apparatus 26 is then actuated to form a wire bond on end 17 of wire 16 to an appropriate bond pad on chip or die 10. After the formation of the bond of end 17 of wire 16 to the bond pad of die 10, the bonding apparatus is moved to appropriate end 15 of lead finger 14 for the formation of a suitable wire bond thereto by end 18 of wire 16. After the formation of the bond of the end 18 of wire 16 to the end 15 of lead finger 14, the penetrating individual independent clamp 24 and the bonding apparatus are actuated to remove the clamp 24 and the bonding apparatus 26 from the end 15 of the lead finger 14. Alternately, the bonding apparatus 26 is actuated to remove the apparatus from the bond location at the end 15 of the lead finger 14 prior to or after the removal of the penetrating individual independent clamp 24 from a lead finger 14. During the removal of the bonding apparatus 26 from the end 15 of the lead finger 14 the conventional or penetrating clamp 22, if in contact with the end 15 of a lead finger 14, supplies the necessary force to retain the finger 14 in position relative to other lead fingers located around chip or die 10, both bonded and unbonded. As previously stated, it is not necessary for the penetrating

individual independent clamp 24 to remain in contact with the end 15 of lead finger 14 during the removal of the bonding apparatus 26 therefrom. After the wire 16 has been bonded to the desired bond pad of die 10 and end 15 of lead finger 14, the process is repeated until all desired wire bonds between lead fingers 14 and bond pads of chip or die 10 are completed.

If desired to have additional clamping of the lead finger 14, either a fixed conventional or penetrating clamp 22 and/or a second penetrating individual independent clamp 24 may be used with the bonding apparatus 26. The second penetrating individual independent clamp 24 may be actuated and moved from the lead finger 14 with, before or after the removal of the bonding apparatus 26 from the lead finger 14.

It will be understood that the present invention may have changes, additions, deletions, modifications, and sequence of operation which fall within the scope of the invention. For instance, the fixed clamp may be eliminated and a second independent clamp used in its place.

What is claimed is:

1. Apparatus for connecting a bond pad of a semiconductor chip and a lead finger of a lead frame, said apparatus comprising:

a penetrating clamp engaging a portion of said lead finger for said connecting of said bond pad of said semiconductor chip to said lead finger, the penetrating clamp having a portion thereof penetrating a portion of said lead finger.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp comprises:

an independent clamp having the ability to move independently in the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp is moveable independently in any direction of the movement of the bonding apparatus.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp comprises:

a fixed clamp engaging said lead fingers of said lead frame.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said bonding apparatus includes:

bonding apparatus exerting a force of substantially 50 to 100 grams when contacting the lead finger.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said semiconductor chip.

7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said lead finger.

8. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the heating apparatus operates at substantially at least 200 degrees Centigrade to heat said semiconductor chip.

9. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said semiconductor chip is heated before being connected to said lead finger.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted through the use of a spring engaging a portion of the penetrating clamp.

12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp has an end portion thereof including an edge.

13. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially semicircular shape.

14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially arcuate shape.

15. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a substantially articulated end portion thereof for movement.

16. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp penetrates a soft metal coating located on said lead finger.

17. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a point on the end thereof.

18. The apparatus of claim 1, further including:

a fixed clamp for engaging a portion of said lead finger.

19. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a sharp edge thereon.

20. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a rounded portion on the bottom thereof.

21. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the penetration clamp includes a plurality of rounded portions on the bottom thereof.

22. Apparatus for bonding a wire to a bond pad located on a semiconductor chip and a lead finger of a lead frame, said bonding apparatus having a portion thereof for the dispensing of said wire to be bonded to said bond pad and said lead finger and bonding said wire to said bond pad or said lead finger, said apparatus comprising:

a penetrating clamp engaging another portion of said lead finger for the bonding of said wire thereto, the penetrating clamp penetrating a portion of the lead finger.

23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp comprises:

an independent clamp having the ability to move independently in the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis.

24. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp is moveable independently in any direction of the movement of the bonding apparatus.

25. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp comprises:

a fixed clamp engaging said lead fingers of said lead frame.

26. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said bonding apparatus includes:

bonding apparatus exerting a force of substantially 50 to 100 grams when contacting the lead finger.

27. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said semiconductor chip.

28. The apparatus of claim 27, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said lead finger.

29. The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the heating apparatus operates at substantially at least 200 degrees Centigrade to heat said semiconductor chip.

30. The apparatus of claim 27, wherein said semiconductor chip is heated before a wire is bonded thereto.

31. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted.

32. The apparatus of claim 31, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted through the use of a spring engaging a portion of the penetrating clamp.

33. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp has an end portion thereof including an edge.

34. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially semicircular shape.

35. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially arcuate shape.

36. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a substantially articulated end portion thereof for movement.

37. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto.

38. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a point on the end thereof.

39. The apparatus of claim 22, further including:

a fixed clamp for engaging a portion of said lead finger.

40. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a sharp edge thereon.

41. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a rounded portion on the bottom thereof.

42. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the penetration clamp includes a plurality of rounded portions on the bottom thereof.

43. Apparatus for bonding a wire to a bond pad located on a semiconductor chip and a lead finger of a lead frame, said apparatus comprising:

bonding apparatus having a portion thereof for the dispensing of said wire to be bonded to said bond pad and said lead finger and bonding said wire to said bond pad or said lead finger; and

a penetrating clamp engaging a another portion of said lead finger for the bonding of said wire thereto, the penetrating clamp penetrating a portion of the lead finger.

44. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp comprises:

an independent clamp having the ability to move independently in the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis.

45. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp is moveable independently in any direction of the movement of the bonding apparatus.

46. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp comprises:

a fixed clamp engaging said lead fingers of said lead frame.

47. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the bonding apparatus exerts a force of substantially 50 to 100 grams when contacting the lead finger.

48. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said semiconductor chip.

49. The apparatus of claim 48, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said lead finger.

50. The apparatus of claim 48, wherein the heating apparatus operates at substantially at least 200 degrees Centigrade to heat said semiconductor chip.

51. The apparatus of claim 48, wherein said semiconductor chip is heated before a wire is bonded thereto.

52. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted.

53. The apparatus of claim 52, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted through the use of a spring engaging a portion of the penetrating clamp.

54. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp has an end portion thereof including an edge.

55. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially semicircular shape.

56. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially arcuate shape.

57. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a substantially articulated end portion thereof for movement.

58. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto.

59. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a point on the end thereof.

60. The apparatus of claim 43, further including:

a fixed clamp for engaging a portion of said lead finger.

61. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a sharp edge thereon.

62. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetrating clamp includes a rounded portion on the bottom thereof.

63. The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the penetration clamp includes a plurality of rounded portions on the bottom thereof.

64. Apparatus for bonding a wire to a bond pad located on a semiconductor chip and a lead finger of a lead frame, said apparatus comprising:

bonding apparatus having a portion thereof for the dispensing of said wire to be bonded to said bond pad and said lead finger and bonding said wire to said bond pad or said lead finger;

a fixed clamp engaging a portion of said lead finger; and a penetrating clamp engaging a another portion of said lead finger for the bonding of said wire thereto, the penetrating clamp being movable.

65. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp is located between the bonding apparatus and a fixed clamp engaging a portion of the lead finger during the bonding of said wire thereto.

66. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp comprises:

a penetrating independent clamp having the ability to move independently in the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis.

67. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp is moveable independently in any direction of the movement of the bonding apparatus.

68. The apparatus of claim 64, the bonding apparatus exerts a force of substantially 50 to 100 grams when contacting the lead finger.

69. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said semiconductor chip.

70. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said lead finger.

71. The apparatus of claim 70, wherein the heating apparatus operates at least at substantially 200 degrees Centigrade to heat said semiconductor chip.

72. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein said semiconductor chip is heated before a wire is bonded thereto.

73. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted.

74. The apparatus of claim 73, wherein the independent clamp is resiliently mounted through the use of a spring engaging a portion of the penetrating clamp.

75. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having an edge.

76. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially semicircular shape.

77. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof having a substantially an arcuate shape.

78. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp includes an end portion thereof articulated for movement.

79. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp is located between the bonding apparatus and the fixed clamp engaging a portion of said lead finger during the bonding of said wire thereto.

80. The apparatus of claim 64, wherein the penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto.

81. Apparatus for bonding a wire to a bond pad located on a semiconductor chip and a lead finger of a lead frame, said apparatus comprising:

bonding apparatus having a portion thereof for the dispensing of said wire to be bonded to said bond pad and said lead finger and bonding said wire to said bond pad or said lead finger;

a first penetrating clamp engaging a portion of said lead finger; and

a second penetrating clamp engaging another portion of said lead finger for the bonding of said wire thereto.

82. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first penetrating clamp is located between the bonding apparatus and the second penetrating clamp engaging a portion of the lead finger during the bonding of said wire thereto.

83. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first penetrating clamp comprises:

a penetrating clamp having the ability to move as desired in the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis.

84. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first penetrating clamp is moveable independent of the movement of the bonding apparatus.

85. The apparatus of claim 81, the bonding apparatus exerts a force of substantially 50 to 100 grams when contacting said lead finger.

86. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said semiconductor chip.

87. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

heating apparatus located beneath said lead finger.

88. The apparatus of claim 86, wherein the heating apparatus operates at substantially 200 degrees Centigrade to heat said semiconductor chip.

89. The apparatus of claim 86, wherein said semiconductor chip is heated before a wire is bonded thereto.

90. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first independent clamp is resiliently mounted.

91. The apparatus of claim 90, wherein the first independent clamp is resiliently mounted through the use of a spring engaging a portion of the penetrating clamp.

92. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first penetrating clamp is located between the bonding apparatus and the second penetrating clamp includes a fixed clamp engaging a portion of the lead finger during the bonding of said wire thereto.

93. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the second penetrating clamp comprises:

a penetrating clamp having the ability to move as desired in the x-axis, y-axis and z-axis.

94. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the second penetrating clamp is moveable independent of the movement of the bonding apparatus.

95. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first penetrating clamp is moveable independent of the movement of the bonding apparatus and the second penetrating clamp.

96. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto.

97. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the second penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto.

98. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the first penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto and wherein the second first penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto.

99. The apparatus of claim 81, wherein the second penetrating clamp is located on an opposite side of the lead finger than the bonding apparatus during the bonding of said wire thereto, the second penetrating clamp including a fixed clamp.

100. A method of bonding a wire to a bond pad of a semiconductor chip and lead finger of a lead frame, said method comprising the steps of:

positioning a penetrating clamp over a portion of said lead finger to retain said lead finger in position for the bonding of said wire thereto.

101. The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of:

providing a bonding apparatus to bond said wire to said lead finger.

102. The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of:

actuating the bonding apparatus to bond said wire to said lead finger.

103. The method of claim 102, further comprising the step of:

removing the penetrating clamp from engagement with a portion of said lead finger before the removal of the bonding apparatus from the lead finger.

104. The method of claim 100, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted.

105. The method of claim 100, wherein the penetrating clamp is movable in the x-axis direction, the y-axis direction, and the z-axis direction.

106. The method of claim 101, wherein the penetrating clamp is located on one side of said lead finger and the bonding apparatus is located on the other side of said lead finger.

107. A method of bonding a wire to a bond pad of a semiconductor chip and lead finger of a lead frame, said method comprising the steps of:

positioning a first clamp over a portion of said lead finger to retain said lead finger in position for the bonding of said wire thereto; and

positioning a penetrating clamp over another portion of said lead finger to retain said lead finger in position for the bonding of said wire thereto.

108. The method of claim 107, further comprising the step of:

providing a bonding apparatus to bond said wire to said lead finger.

109. The method of claim 108, further comprising the step of:

actuating the bonding apparatus to bond said wire to said lead finger.

110. The method of claim 109, further comprising the step of:

removing the penetrating clamp from engagement with a portion of said lead finger before the removal of the bonding apparatus from the lead finger.

111. The method of claim 107, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted.

112. The method of claim 107, wherein the penetrating clamp is movable in the x-axis direction, the y-axis direction, and the z-axis direction.

113. The method of claim 107, wherein the penetrating clamp is located on one side of said lead finger and the bonding apparatus is located on the other side of said lead finger.

114. A method of bonding a wire to a bond pad of a semiconductor chip and lead finger of a lead frame, said method comprising the steps of:

positioning a first penetrating clamp over a portion of said lead finger to retain said lead finger in position for the bonding of said wire thereto; and

positioning a second penetrating clamp over another portion of said lead finger to retain said lead finger in position for the bonding of said wire thereto.

115. The method of claim 114, further comprising the step of:

providing a bonding apparatus to bond said wire to said lead finger.

116. The method of claim 115, further comprising the step of:

actuating the bonding apparatus to bond said wire to said lead finger.

117. The method of claim 116, further comprising the step of:

removing the second penetrating clamp from engagement with another portion of said lead finger before the removal of the bonding apparatus from the lead finger.

118. The method of claim 114, wherein the second penetrating clamp is positioned between the first penetrating clamp and the end of said lead finger.

119. The method of claim 114, wherein the first penetrating clamp and the second penetrating clamp are independently movable with respect to each other and said semiconductor chip.

120. The method of claim 114, wherein the first penetrating clamp and the second penetrating clamp are each movable in the x-axis direction, the y-axis direction, and the z-axis direction.

121. The method of claim 114, wherein the first penetrating clamp is located on one side of said lead finger and the bonding apparatus is located on the other side of said lead finger.

122. The method of claim 114, wherein the second penetrating clamp is located on one side of said lead finger and the bonding apparatus is located on the other side of said lead finger.

123. The method of claim 114, wherein the first penetrating clamp and the second penetrating clamps are located on one side of said lead finger and the bonding apparatus is located on the other side of said lead finger.

124. The method of claim 114, wherein the second penetrating clamp includes a fixed clamp.

125. The method of claim 114, wherein the second penetrating clamp is located on one side of said lead finger and the bonding apparatus is located on the other side of said lead finger, the second penetrating clamp including a fixed clamp.

126. A method of connecting a bond pad of a semiconductor chip and lead finger of a lead frame, said method comprising the steps of:

positioning a penetrating clamp over a portion of said lead finger to retain said lead finger in position for said connecting said bond pad of said semiconductor chip and said lead finger of said lead frame.

127. The method of claim 126, further comprising the step of:

providing a connecting apparatus to connect said bond pad of said semiconductor chip to said lead finger of said lead frame.

128. The method of claim 127, further comprising the step of:

actuating the connecting apparatus to connect said bond pad of said semiconductor chip to said lead finger of said lead frame.

129. The method of claim 128, further comprising the step of:

removing the penetrating clamp from engagement with a portion of said lead finger before the removal of the connecting apparatus from said lead finger.

130. The method of claim 126, wherein the penetrating clamp is resiliently mounted.

131. The method of claim 126, wherein the penetrating clamp is movable in the x-axis direction, the y-axis direction, and the z-axis direction.

132. The method of claim 126, wherein the penetrating clamp is located on one side of said lead finger and the connecting apparatus is located on the other side of said lead finger.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

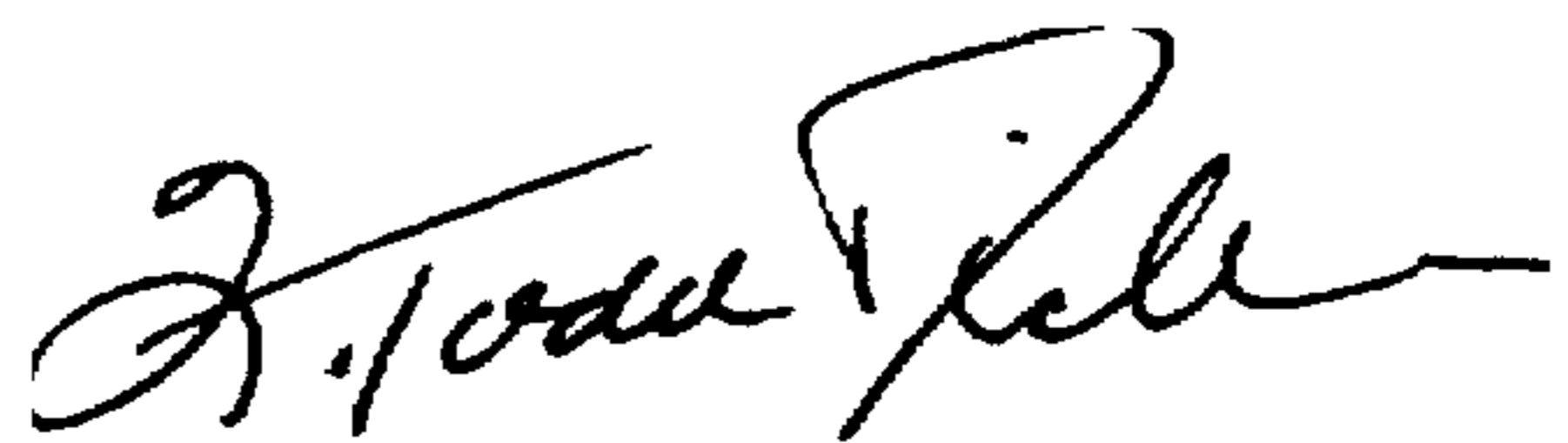
PATENT NO. : 5,673,845
DATED : October 7, 1997
INVENTOR(S) : Ball

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

- In column 2, line 58, after "use of" delete "a"
- In column 3, line 21, after "bonding of" insert --a--
- In column 4, line 29, change "genetic" to --generic--
- In column 4, line 31, after "substantially" delete --- (period)
- In column 6, line 42, change "immobilized" to --immobilize--
- In column 8, line 7, change "is" to --in--
- In column 12, line 29, after "engaging" delete --a--
- In column 12, line 43, after "64," insert --wherein--
- In column 13, line 3, at the beginning of the line, delete --an--
- In column 13, line 23, after "engaging" delete --a--
- In column 13, line 36, after "81," insert --wherein--
- In column 16, line 6, change "clamps" to --clamp--
- In column 16, line 21, after "for" delete --said--

Signed and Sealed this
Twenty-second Day of June, 1999

Attest:



Q. TODD DICKINSON

Attesting Officer

Acting Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks